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UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Greeley, Colorado

The Graduate School

THE MISSING ART: DANCE ADVOCACY AND INTER-ARTS  
COLLABORATION IN NEW JERSEY PUBLIC  
HIGH SCHOOLS

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts

Vicki Jenkins

College of Performing and Visual Arts  
School of Theatre Arts and Dance  
Dance Education

December 2019

This Thesis by: Vicki Jenkins

Entitled: *The Missing Art: Dance Advocacy and Inter-Arts Collaboration in New Jersey Public High Schools*

has been approved as meeting the requirement for the Degree of a Master of Arts in College of Performing and Visual Arts in School of Theatre Arts and Dance, Program in Dance Education

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## **ABSTRACT**

Jenkins, Vicki. *The Missing Art: Dance Advocacy and Inter-Arts Collaboration in New Jersey Public High Schools*. Unpublished Master of Arts thesis, University of Northern Colorado, 2019.

The purpose of this research was to explore the effects dance has on New Jersey public high schools' performing arts curriculum and its students. It also explored how dance was being utilized in schools and the ways in which art teachers worked together in their programs. The research instrument used in this study was an electronic survey that included quantitative and qualitative questions for data gathering. Participants in this study were from eleven New Jersey high schools that included forty-two arts teachers and eight administrators.

The data suggested dance was an important component to the performing arts curricula for teachers, administrators, and students; however, it also presented challenges to both teachers and students when attempting to incorporate it within the school day. The data revealed discrepancies in perceptions about dance as well as challenges dance educators continued to face in public schools. This research was intended to advocate for the importance of dance in the arts curriculums and inter-arts collaboration for both teachers and students.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Goal of Thesis**

Dance is all around us and touches our lives in many ways. We find ourselves dancing to celebrate, communicate, heal, escape, and unify us in difficult times. Dance has the power to transform the simplest ideas into powerful stories. Nora Ambrosio wrote in her book, *Learning about Dance*:

Dance has the power to communicate and evoke responses. It provides a means for self-expression and enables the participants and viewer to feel and experience the joy of moving. Throughout history and all around the world, dance has been significant in the lives of many people: from the tribal leader enacting a sacred ritual to the professional dancer who has dedicated his or her life to dance to the person who takes a dance class just for fun. (3)

Although dance is a required core subject in New Jersey public high schools, it is still missing from most performing arts high school curricula today. According to the New Jersey Arts Education Census Project (Morrison, Young, and Cirillo 1), only twenty percent of high schools offer dance in their daily curriculum (1). For the few schools that did offer the four arts disciplines of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts, many arts teachers might not get the chance to work together. For the arts, curricular collaboration could be an essential component to a successful program because “dance does not exist in

a vacuum, it needs many of the other art forms to be successful” (Wright and Hernandez 9). Collaboration is a cornerstone for 21st-century skills; benefits include creativity, communication, and critical thinking (Schupp 152). Faber and Minton, the authors of *Thinking with the Dancing Brain: Embodying Neuroscience*, stated many skills needed for successful employment are not being addressed in our public schools: “Collaboration is not merely a skill for learning or work; it is a human imperative. Collaboration extends the horizon of knowledge and actions beyond personal limitations to a wider collective endeavor” (156). Current employers in the United States are looking for people who could be creative, have excellent leadership skills, and could solve problems (Faber and Minton 151). Collaboration is a vital component to our society and the arts in our educational system are a way to include this important component. Noticing the void within our educational system. the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills gathered a group of educators, business leaders, and policymakers in 2002 to assess what is needed to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Schupp 152); some of what they learned was collaboration could empower students, create critical thinking, and encourage empathy and diversity. These ideas were often referenced in development of new teaching strategies and educational institutions. Arts collaboration should be a natural progression when teaching dance in public education.

Brenda Pugh McCutchen, the author of *Teaching Dance as Art in Education*, stated:

Dance naturally incorporates aspects of the other arts because we share vocabulary and creative urges. Creative artists in all the arts know the principles of design (PODS) as artistic benchmarks and use them to critique works. The arts

share common elements as well as a performance, exhibit or production aspect.

The times shape each art form just as surely as does its cultural milieu, so the arts share some cultural, aesthetic, and historical similarities. Many dance styles developed concurrently with artistic and musical styles of the day. (302)

Ten principles of design that apply to composition in each of the four art forms are unity, variety, repetition, contrast, sequence, climax, proportion, harmony, balance, and transition (McCutchen 528). These unified principles are just another example of how the arts are intrinsically intertwined and should drive collaboration within arts curricula.

The goal for this thesis was to advocate for dance programming in New Jersey public high schools and to examine the outcomes dance has on New Jersey public high schools' arts curricula. This study also analyzed the overall impact of student growth and appreciation for the arts. This thesis attempted to answer the following research questions:

- Q1     What outcomes are prevalent when dance is added to a New Jersey public school arts curriculum?
- Q2     In what ways do inter-arts collaborations offer value to a school's climate and its students?

### **Purpose of Thesis**

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects dance had on New Jersey public high schools' arts curricula and its students. Data discovered might lead to further implementation of dance education in New Jersey's public high schools with the hope of dance being offered in all kindergarten-twelve public schools.

In New Jersey, schools are awarded and identified as model schools of the arts if they implement all four arts disciplines of dance, theatre, music and art in a sequential

order. However, according to Arts Education of New Jersey, as of 2015, only twenty-eight kindergarten-twelve schools have currently qualified for this distinction (Morrison et al. 5). Although the third installment of the New Jersey Arts Education Census Project that was released in September of 2017 stated nearly all students (99.4%) in the state had access to arts instruction, only eleven percent of students had access to all four arts disciplines required by state code (Morrison et al. 5). With such a low percentage of students able to access all four art disciplines, field researchers have yet to investigate the importance of full integration of the arts or inter-arts collaboration that could take place when the arts subjects work together. Dance artists are familiar with the importance of collaboration and its ability to help create successful works considering that

Dance also draws on the other arts: music for accompaniment; visual art and design for sets, lighting, costumes, props, and other visual effects; and theatrical art. As one of the core subjects in America's schools, dance has a necessary role to play. (McCutchen 296)

Examining all aspects of art appreciation including school climate and overall collaboration from the perspectives of teachers, administrators, and students could help to inform schools on the best practices of how to utilize dance and inter-arts collaboration in high school arts curricula.

Employing data from surveys of dance, theatre, art, and music, teachers as well as administrators could better help discover the outcomes dance has on arts curricula and its students. Having outcomes that could show how the arts affect school climate and student engagement are crucial to the growth of arts programs. This study also sought to address the ways in which administrators supported their arts programs and what they viewed as a

successful arts program. Exploring the many ways teachers and administrators engaged with a fully integrated dance program as well as how they collaborated could lead to a better understanding of how dance impacts other art forms and its students when added to a performing arts high school curriculum in New Jersey.

### **Significance of the Study**

All four of the arts were included as a core subject in the bipartisan goals of the 2000-Educate America Act passed by Congress (McCutchen 24) and arts education in New Jersey public high schools continues to grow. One can go to most public high schools in New Jersey and attend a band concert, choir concert, or a musical production, but very rarely did one encounter a dance concert. Although dance is required in New Jersey as a core academic subject with the other arts alongside music, visual arts, and theatre, rarely is it implemented in New Jersey public high schools. According to the third installment of the New Jersey Arts Education Census Project (Morrison et al. 1), 99.4% of students attend schools that offer arts education. Yet, only eleven percent of students have access to all four arts disciplines required by state code. Dance and theatre are among the lowest arts disciplines offered (Morrison et al. 1).

In 2013, the National Dance Education Organization conducted a report, *Evidence: A Report on the Impact of Dance in the K-12 Setting*; the study found dance to be a key contributor to deeper comprehension and more visible engagement in the learning process itself (Bonbright, Bradley, and Dooling 11). The study also stated that in schools where dance programs did well, students' attendance was better, teachers appeared more fulfilled, and the overall sense of community grew (Bonbright et al. 56).

Dance was found time and again to be a contributor to deep critical thinking (Faber and Minton 153). Faber and Minton stated:

The deepest critical thinking occurs when interpreting, analyzing, critiquing and relating dance to other experiences and learning. These thought processes are highlighted most in creating dance, reflective performing, responding to dance, and connecting dance with personal experiences, contextual meaning, cultural significance, historical events, or other life phenomena. (153)

One could only be left to wonder—with all the research on the importance of dance programs—why it was continually left out in New Jersey public schools? A few reasons that continually arose were a lack of space as well as budget issues. With many schools facing budgetary cuts, often the arts were the first on the list to get eliminated even though they proved time and again to be advantageous to students and communities (Ambrosio 178). Dance, unfortunately, seemed to be the first of the arts to be cut due to the following reasons: it requires space and the cost for the space can seem overwhelming for districts. With little data on the importance of dance in schools, districts often did not approve the addition of a dance program to their academic curriculum.

When dance is taken out of the arts curriculum equation, there is a question of whether arts programs are reaching their full potential and possibly missing an opportunity for their students to receive a full understanding and appreciation of the arts. A study written by Bautista, Tan, Ponnusamy, and Yau explored how the teaching of multiple art forms could be integrated successfully. The case study was developed and designed by arts faculty members who worked together using the idea of space to implement instruction in dance, music, drama, and visual arts. The authors aimed to show

similarities among the concepts and processes of all art forms as a guide for teachers to create something similar in their own teaching environments. The students in their study discovered the connection between the arts and experimented with new art forms that might not have been their major focus. Bautista et al. found when students utilized a multidisciplinary approach in the arts, a deeper sense of understanding and appreciation was created. It also reinforced the idea that using art is helpful when teaching higher order of thinking (Bautista et al. 610).

Studying each discipline could help provide inspiration to keep choreography, teaching, and research from becoming stagnated and provide continued growth in artists. An article written by Wright and Hernandez explored how the inspiration for the creation of dance works could come from other arts mediums: "Dance is essentially inseparable from music, and either one can serve as inspiration for the other. Dance is innately theatrical, and the theater itself is often the place in which dances are performed or showcased" (9). Considering this idea, it would be hard to imagine teaching one art form without the other. This reflects back to the concept of the ten PODS that apply to the composition in each of the four art forms. These unified principles offer a concrete example of how the arts share many of the same concepts and therefore are often used together to drive collaboration within arts curricula.

Other arts disciplines are often employed when teaching lessons on the history of dance. Erinn Leibhard wrote the article "It Don't Mean a Thing if It Ain't Got Musicality" and stated that studying jazz music history is a logical approach when teaching jazz dance history (159). The course she created showed the practical application of using multiple arts subjects with one another to enhance students'



experience and readiness for the next steps. It also incorporated a wide variety of teaching tactics, methods, and approaches that helped with a particular content.

With so few dance programs offered in New Jersey's public high schools, collecting data from those high schools that currently offer dance would help to advocate for the importance of dance in the arts curricula and the effects dance has on the student population. This study also sought to examine how dance is being utilized in schools and the many ways in which arts teachers work together in their programs.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **The Importance of the Arts in Public Schools**

For many years, art in public schools has consisted mostly of music and visual arts. It has long been an important component to a well-rounded student. Most of us can remember playing the recorder in elementary school or choosing an instrument to study, exploring colors, cutting, tracing, and creating pictures in art class. Using the arts is a way for students to create and actively learn. Sandra Minton, the author of *Using Movement to Teach Academics*, stated:

Active learning contrasts with traditional instruction in which teachers do most of the talking and children remain passive; through active learning, students have opportunities to talk, listen, read, write and reflect. Active or experiential learning helps children understand and remember information. Many educators believe that children learn best when they are doing because they become engaged with the subject matter. (1)

When active learning is used, it incorporates interdisciplinary teaching approaches as well as utilizes different ways in which each child learns (Minton 1). Some students might find academics become easier when the arts are introduced as "students acquire and process information based on their learning styles" (Feldman, Montesrin, and Amandi 157). Howard Gardner, an American developmental psychologist known for his

theory of multiple intelligences, identified eight intelligences that could inform learning styles: logical/mathematical, linguistic, spatial, musical kinesthetic, naturalist, and interpersonal (Feldman et al. 160). In their article, *Automatic Detection of Learning Styles: State of the Art*, Feldman et al. stated, "Gardner's theory provides a framework that recognizes several intelligences and suggests that people use one or two to maximize their personal learning" (160). For a student who might be struggling to learn state capitols, using Gardner's musical theory might help by having the students put state capitols to a rhythm or melody. Likewise, a student might have difficulty coming up with an idea for a story but a teacher could use Gardner's theory of kinesthetic learning to potentially tap into inspiration. Having students draw an idea rather than use words might help avoid anxiety about writing.

Incorporating the arts in education adds another learning component—one that might not have been explored before. As Brenda McCutchen, in her book *Teaching Dance as Art in Education*, stated:

Arts education is the process of teaching and learning how to create and produce the visual and performing arts and how to understand and evaluate art forms created by others. With language, mathematics, the natural sciences, and the social sciences, the arts constitute a fundamental curriculum. At a minimum, such a curriculum encompasses four basic aspects with the expectation that students will: create and perform the arts, understand the role and importance of the arts in culture and history, perceive and respond to the qualities for the arts and make sound judgments about the arts and understand the bases on which those judgments rest. (4)

Many students look forward to these classes and can achieve success in areas they might have struggled with if not for the arts in schools. In her article *Transforming a Low-Performing Urban School Through Dance*, Shelese Douglas stated:

Incorporating student choice and structuring collaborative learning experiences is important because it sends a strong message to my students that their ideas, experiences, creativity, and interests are valued and appreciated, and also positions them as a learning authority in the classroom. (16)

Ms. Douglas also found using dance specifically helped students work together and create strong relationships with other teachers, administrators, and the entire school community (17). Being able to create and feeling a sense of ownership of one's ideas promoted excitement for students. "An arts education perspective expects critical thinking in all the artistic processes: creating, performing, and responding. This perspective also promotes knowing dance as art and human expression from across time and place" (McCutchen 4). In her article "Authentic Arts-Based Learning in Teacher Education: A Musical Theatre Experience," Holly Ogden, Christopher DeLuca, and Michelle Searle stated:

Researchers report that arts-based learning promotes artistic skill developments as well as arts-related and ancillary outcomes. Some of these outcomes include: increased metacognition, increased motivation, sustained attention, cooperation skills, benefits to working and long-term memory, the development of general cognitive and attitudinal habits of mind, the development of fair-minded citizens and developments of emotions and a sense of connection. These skills are views

as transferable to diverse teaching contexts and as such, we suggest are important for the development of new teachers. (371)

*History of the Dance Arts  
in Public High Schools*

Historically, dance was often implemented in public education through physical education departments and in some states, it still is. Dance was taught with mostly social dances at the forefront with physical education teachers instructing folk dances, square dances, and various line dances (Ambrosio 177). Physical education departments were not presenting dance as an art form; rather, it was as another physical activity in their physical education (PE) classes. In the 1970s, colleges began placing dance in the Fine Arts departments rather than PE. Two women credited with bringing dance to higher education were Margaret H' Doubler (which she did through physical education) and Martha Hill who established the first Bachelor of Arts in 1932 at Bennington College in Vermont (Ambrosio 178). Although colleges made the change, kindergarten-twelve schools took much longer to follow suit and, in some cases, still have not (Agresta-Stratton and Monson 5). Because of the discrepancies of where dance falls in the curriculum, each state and district determine which department houses a dance program. In New Jersey, this is especially confusing when it comes to who can teach dance in public schools. Elementary teachers have different criteria for teaching dance than teachers in grades six through twelve (Agresta-Stratton & Monson 6). In grades six through twelve, teachers must be certified in dance to offer dance instruction if the program is housed in the fine and performing arts curriculum but if dance is placed in the PE curriculum, only a teacher certified in PE can teach dance (Agresta-Stratton and Monson 6). Learning dance as an art form can be done outside of school; however, this

means families must pay for supplemental dance education and equitable access is not achieved. As Nora Ambrosia stated, "This requirement is one of the reasons why dance educators feel very passionate about having dance in the public education system-so that every child, regardless of financial ability, can participate in this artistic activity" (178). With all the hard work and dedication of many of our college professors and those who currently teach dance in public schools, many obstacles remain with dance education in public schools.

One of the biggest obstacles in adding dance to a performing arts curriculum tends to be a school's budget. Dance requires a proper space, which can be quite costly. A dance room requires a space at least thirty by forty feet, proper flooring, mirrors, an adequate sound system, proper ventilation, and an office space (Hernandez and Strickland 22). Flooring is vital for the safety of the dancers as the floor should be sprung or at least have a floating sub floor that needs daily cleaning. Mirrors need to be made of tempered glass and need to extend six feet above the floor; ballet barres should be installed or, if freestanding, must be sturdy enough to support students (Hernandez and Strickland 22).

Another obstacle involves standardizing the qualifications and higher level training of those who teach dance. In recent years, there has been an increase in higher education programs offering dance certifications for kindergarten-twelve settings. Ann Green Gilbert, founder of the Creative Dance Center in Seattle and known for her development of the creative movement technique BrainDance, wrote an article in 2005 entitled "Dance Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Global Perspective," which highlights the common challenges that happen globally and the associated questions including who

should teach, who should teach the teachers, and what they should teach (26). She found that, throughout the world, dance in public education was not being implemented with full-time teachers but rather physical education teachers or companies in residence. Fortunately, since Gilbert's article, dance in higher education has become much more respected in post-secondary education and enormous numbers of programs are being added to schools; however, with budget cuts, there are still major hurdles to overcome (Ambrosio 178). Agresta-Stratton and Monson stated:

Whether dance lives in the Arts, or in PE, or in both it is undeniable that dance is an art, therefore the dance educator needs to be an expert in the physicality of dance as well as the artistic aspect of dance. As a dance educator needs to understand and be able to teach the four artistic processes common to all art forms- creating, performing, responding and connecting. (9)

*New Jersey High School  
Arts Education*

In New Jersey, schools are awarded model school of the arts if they implement all four arts disciplines (music, theatre, visual arts, and dance) in a sequential order but according to Arts Education of New Jersey, as of 2015, only 28 schools have currently qualified for this distinction (Morrison et al. 5). Although the third installment of the New Jersey Arts Education Census Project that was released in September of 2017 states nearly all students (99.4%) in the state have access to arts instruction, only 11% of students have access to all four arts disciplines required by state code (Morrison et al. 5). According to the New Jersey Department of Education, New Jersey's Student Learning Standards for the Visual and Performing Arts were first adopted by the State Board of Education in 1996 (Murphy and Oliver 1). In 2004 and then in 2009, it was then revised

and readopted (Murphy and Oliver 1). The New Jersey Department of Education requires high school students to complete five credits successfully in one visual and performing arts course to meet graduation requirements. The newer 2009 standards stated all kindergarten-twelve students must have "sequential dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts classes and must be able to communicate at a basic level in the arts and demonstrate proficiency in at least one arts discipline" (Murphy and Oliver 1). It also stated all four arts disciplines must be made available to the students; however, the researcher discovered this was not the case in most schools, specifically with the art of dance. To help ease the challenges of adequate space, The New Jersey Department of Education allowed dance classes to be taught even if there was no specified dance room, allowing for spaces on the stage or a gymnasium with a wooden floor (Murphy and Oliver). If a classroom was all a school had available, the school utilized that room if it was free of obstruction. Teachers had to obtain specific credentials to teach dance. A 1635 endorsement allowed teachers to teach dance within the Visual and Performing arts curriculum in a kindergarten-twelve setting; however, they could not teach in a vocational high school. This required a different endorsement for which an applicant needed to provide proof of having completed 8,000 professional working hours over the last ten years. It was also important to note that for the secondary level, dance could not be given the five credits for graduation in the visual and performing arts if the class was taught by a physical education teacher (Murphy and Oliver 1).

### **Collaboration in Education**

Collaboration is considered a cornerstone for 21st-century skills and the benefits include creativity, communication, and critical thinking. In today's workplace, these



attributes are viewed as essential strengths in not only the workplace but also in society (Schupp 153). In 2002, the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills gathered a group of educators, business leaders, and policymakers to assess what was needed to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and some of what they learned was collaboration could empower students, create critical thinking, and encourage empathy and diversity (Schupp 152). These ideas were often referenced in development of new teaching strategies and educational institutions. In her article, “Teaching Collaborative Skills through Dance: Isolating the Parts to Strengthen the Whole,” Schupp stated:

Surveying and examining research and publications focused on education, industry, contemporary society, and the arts reveal that the ability to collaborate is highly regarded. The facility to work effectively with diverse groups of people to develop new solutions to emerging problems or questions is what drives innovation in contemporary society. (152)

Today's classrooms are no longer solely teacher centered and have students sitting at their desks for long periods of time. Now there is flexible seating, chat stations, and much more student-driven learning techniques. Minton stated:

Most children like and want to move, whether this movement is in the form of playing games, changing from one classroom to another during the school day or performing tasks within a classroom, such as handing out blank paper to other students. There seems to be a limit to how long children can and want to sit or remain in one spot and stay on task. (1)

These approaches demonstrate the need for students to learn how to interact with each other. To be effective collaborators, Schupp mentioned three skill sets students should

achieve: work effectively and respectfully amongst diverse people, use flexibility and compromise to achieve the common goal, and have a shared responsibility for the work (153).

*What is Inter-Arts Collaboration?*

"Curriculum integration was born in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and can be defined as a pedagogical approach that is student centered and focuses on a theme organized around real life issues and problems drawn from several subject areas" (Bautista et al. 610).

When working in the arts, collaboration is a natural process. Dance artists are especially familiar with utilizing multiple subject areas, particularly when creating and choreographing. Dance not only incorporates other arts but general educational classes as well. McCutchen stated, "Dance organically pulls from other disciplines, especially language arts, science, social studies as well as the other arts" (296). For this study, inter-arts collaboration is defined as any lesson or project using multiple arts (dance, theatre, visual arts, and music) simultaneously. Dance artists are familiar with the importance of collaboration and its ability to help create successful works:

Dance also draws on the other arts: music for accompaniment; visual art and design for sets, lighting, costumes, props, and other visual effects; and theatrical art. As one of the core subjects in America's schools, dance has a necessary role to play. (McCutchen 296)

A case study written by Bautista et al. explored how using space could be incorporated in dance, music, drama, and visual arts. Their objective was to show how inter-arts collaboration could be used to create many different lessons using one concept. The goal was for secondary students to discover similarities among dance music, drama,

and visual arts as well as have them experiment with art forms they might not have experienced (Bautista et al.). They found when students utilized a multidisciplinary approach in the arts, it created a deeper sense of understanding and appreciation. It also reinforced the idea that using art was helpful when teaching higher order of thinking (Bautista et al.). In many ways, one cannot separate art forms completely; although the focus might be on one, they are intrinsically intertwined. Erin Leibhards' study, "It Don't Mean a Thing if It Ain't Got Musicality," clearly depicts how a disconnect could happen between the arts, specifically jazz music and jazz dance. She wrote, "This disconnect is fueled by commercialized, ballet-based approaches to jazz that have been popularized by television shows and adopted by many private K-12 studios" (160). If dancers are not understanding the meaning of the music, the dance can seem out of context to an audience.

"There is a long history of collaborations in the choreographic world" (Wright and Hernandez 10). One can see it in popular music like the Macarena or the Electric Slide. Most recently, dance has even infiltrated into the video game phenomenon, especially the game Fortnite. Now avatars in the game have their own dance moves and kids everywhere are performing Fortnite dances in schools, at sports events, and on YouTube. Broadway musicals are now being created based on the stories of artists' lives and choreographers are working with these artists to recreate the movements they made unique. Multimedia disciplines are becoming even more popular as choreographers continue to explore other ways to collaborate to bring their work to another level and increase audience attendance. Bringing multiple arts together reaches a wide range of

audiences and increases appreciation and knowledge of how the arts could work in tandem with each other.

### *Similarities in the Arts*

Many parallels exist among the four main disciplines of art but one of the most applicable is the National Arts Standard (NSAEs) of creating (McCutchen 302). All the arts have categories in the national arts standards including performing, creating, responding, and connecting. "Dance naturally incorporates aspects of the other arts because we share vocabulary and creative urges" (McCutchen 302).

### **Principles of Design**

Brenda Pugh McCutchen, the author of *Teaching Dance as Art in Education*, stated:

Dance naturally incorporates aspects of the other arts because we share vocabulary and creative urges. Creative artists in all the arts know the principles of designs (PODS) as artistic benchmarks and use them to critique works. The arts share common elements as well as a performance, exhibit or production aspect. The times shape each art form just as surely as does its cultural milieu, so the arts share some cultural, aesthetic, and historical similarities. Many dance styles developed concurrently with artistic and musical styles of the day. (302)

The ten principles of designs that apply to composition in each of the four art forms are unity, variety, repetition, contrast, sequence, climax, proportion, harmony, balance, and transition (McCutchen 528). These unified principles are just another example of how the arts are intrinsically intertwined and drive collaboration within arts curricula.

"Authentic Arts-Based Learning in Teacher Education: A Musical Theatre Experience" written by Holly Ogden et al. explored a disconnect between theory and practice in education. The writers defined arts-based learning as an

Arts-based practice that are broadly conceived within music, theatre, visual arts, writing, dance, drama, and photography. Arts-based learning is an umbrella term that prescribes no specific procedure to a produce arts-based project but identifies a genre within which there are a variety of approaches. Instead arts-based learning invites openness, engagement and willingness to take risks. (370)

Once again, regardless of the art form, there are many similarities to the approaches and outcomes the arts all share. Ogden et al. continued writing about the importance of arts-based inquiry as a form of teaching and learning. This process incorporates creating, performing, and appreciating, which was also seen in the NSAEs and argued it is "inherent within creative learning and activity" (Ogden et al. 371).

#### *Integration of Dance With the Other Arts*

As dance continues to evolve and dance education reaches beyond the stage, it is important to create ways in which all the arts can come together to prepare students for an ever-changing field (Schupp 157). "Dance is one of the few places in the school curriculum where groups get the opportunity to work together as a team for a common goal" (McCutchen 296). The NSAEs call for collaboration among dance, music, theatre, and visual arts.

There are many ways to incorporate other art forms with dance. Brenda McCutchen wrote about this topic in detail, explaining that when collaborating with music, choreographic forms and musical forms have similar structures and therefore can

lead to many great collaborations (320). Erin Leibhart demonstrated this integration in her course development where she taught jazz dance technique according to music concepts and the embodiment of jazz music (159). Her course clearly demonstrated how the two disciplines worked cohesively to create a well-rounded understanding of jazz as a culture and not just as one specific art discipline.

McCutchen also wrote about collaboration with dance and visual arts. She believed these two art forms are the most alike because they are spatial arts and emphasize creating (320). She stated:

Both visual arts and dance share elements of line, texture, relationship, shape, perspective and space. Both create three –dimensional forms. Both work with mass and weight- dance does so with numbers of dancers whereas art does so with density and size of shapes. Both direct the eye of the beholder by making visual points of emphasis. (320)

Visual arts can also be a great source of stimuli for choreographers. Today, more and more media arts are being incorporated as a stimulus for dancers and choreographers. Broadway choreographer Camille Brown used media arts in her work *Mr. Tol. E. RAnce*, winning a Bessie Award for outstanding production in 2014. In their case study, Bautista et al. presented how one concept could be used through all the arts of dance, music, drama, and visual arts. This was done in three stages: exposure, experiment, and express, mirroring NSAEs of creating, responding, performing, and connecting. However, instead of choosing an art, the authors chose a particular concept (Bautista et al.). This opened an entirely new way for students to experience different arts. Considering dance and theatre collaborations, McCutchen made the point that "theatre relies on the use of the body in

space and time and with dynamics. It emphasizes the relationships of character to a situation" (321). McCutchen added a word of caution about this partnership even though they both use the human body to communicate:

Dance can be presented artfully with theatre. But too often when dance is part of musical theater or is used to sparkle up dull scenes, it becomes less about dance as an art and more about dance as spectacle and entertainment. Therefore, dance and theater sometimes have less in common than dance and visual art. (321)

The concepts of space, time, and dynamics are all words also used in dance when teaching students about creating. In most high schools, one will almost always observe collaboration with theatre and dance when musicals are being produced; however, there are other ways to integrate these two art forms. Dance and theatre can be used together to analyze different characters and situations as well as to aid in expression and character analysis while performing. This is another way to approach the standard of responding and performing.

### **Summary**

Dance has come a long way since being introduced into the public schools. What started as an activity in physical education classes has evolved into an art form that is a required subject in schools today. Dance is now considered one of the four major art forms to be taught in schools alongside the national standards for art in each discipline. However, after reviewing much of the literature, it became clear these requirements were not being implemented in the state of New Jersey. With dance missing from many of New Jersey schools, the effects are still unknown regarding the implications this has had on some arts curricula in New Jersey public high schools. With so much emphasis on 21<sup>st</sup>

century skills, having all the arts work in tandem would help to contribute to the collaboration and creativity component needed in today's world. The lack of dance in public education might not only impact dance itself but restrain all the arts from reaching their full potential and their ability to promote collaboration and create fully integrated programs.



## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Preparation for the Study**

This chapter presents the methods used to conduct research on dance advocacy and inter-arts collaboration in New Jersey public high schools. Prior to conducting this study, the researcher requested approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) by submitting a narrative that included the purpose of the study, procedures for collecting, analyzing, and handling the data, possible risks and benefits, and any costs or compensations related to the study. The IRB granted final approval to conduct the research study after the researcher made a revision to the application narrative (see Appendix A). The IRB also approved the research instruments including the teacher and administrator surveys and participant consent forms required to conduct the research.

#### **Research Study**

The purpose of this research was to discover the effects dance had on New Jersey public high school arts curricula and their students. The research attempted to answer the following questions:

- Q1     What outcomes are prevalent when dance is added to a New Jersey public high school arts curriculum ?
- Q2     In what ways do inter arts collaborations offer value to a school's climate?

### *Research Participants*

The dance and administrator participants for this study were gathered by contacts the researcher had through networking opportunities and through her involvement with the not-for-profit organization—Dance New Jersey. After those participants agreed to participate, the researcher asked them to reach out to other art teachers and administrators in their schools so she would have most if not all the arts teachers and administrators participate from each school. All the participants were then sent an email with an explanation of the study and a link to an online anonymous survey. All participants were sent a consent form prior to beginning the survey (see Appendix B).

Participants for this study included arts teachers and administrators currently teaching in New Jersey public high schools that offered dance in their arts curricula. A total of eleven schools participated comprised of forty-two teachers and eight administrators. Of the eight administrators, only one was not an arts supervisor. Of the eleven schools surveyed, seventy-six percent had offered dance for over six years, twelve percent had offered it for three to five years, and the remaining twelve percent had only included dance for one to three years. Figure 1 shows the breakdown of the disciplines the teachers taught.

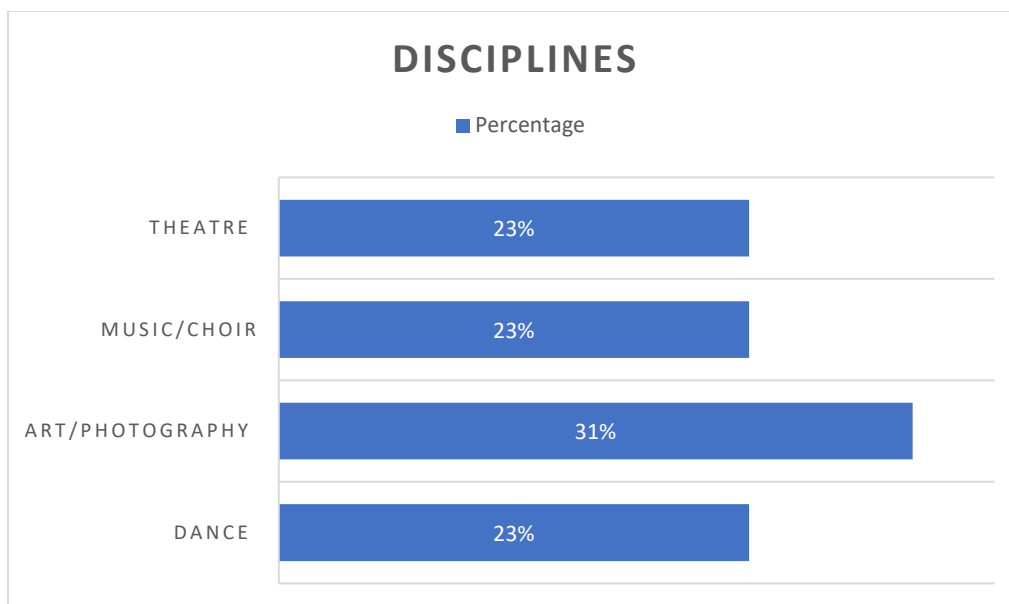


Fig. 1. Disciplines taught.

Of the teachers surveyed, over fifty percent were tenured. Figure 2 shows the breakdown of the years the teacher participants had been in their current position and Figure 3 shows the same experience breakdown of the eight administrators.

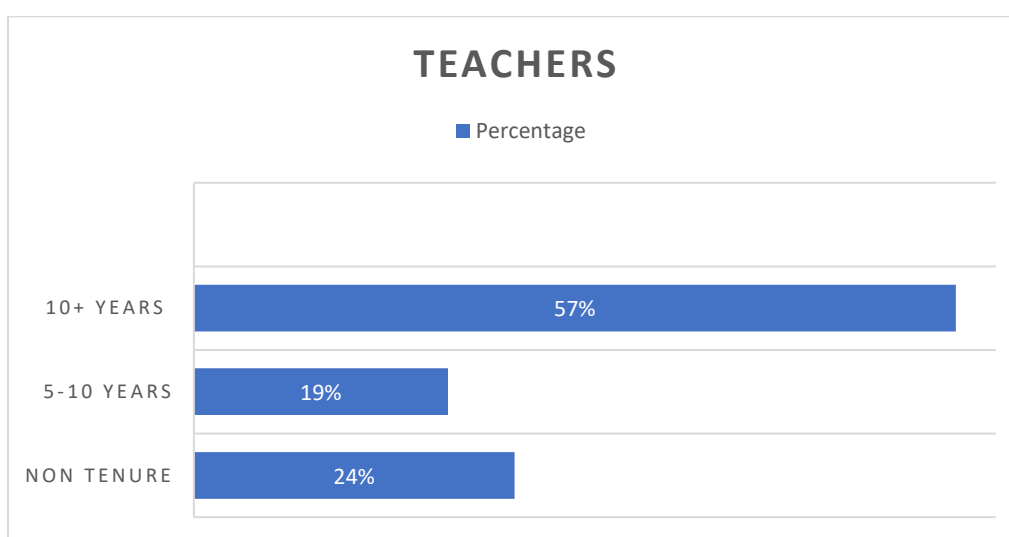


Fig. 2. Years teacher participants taught.

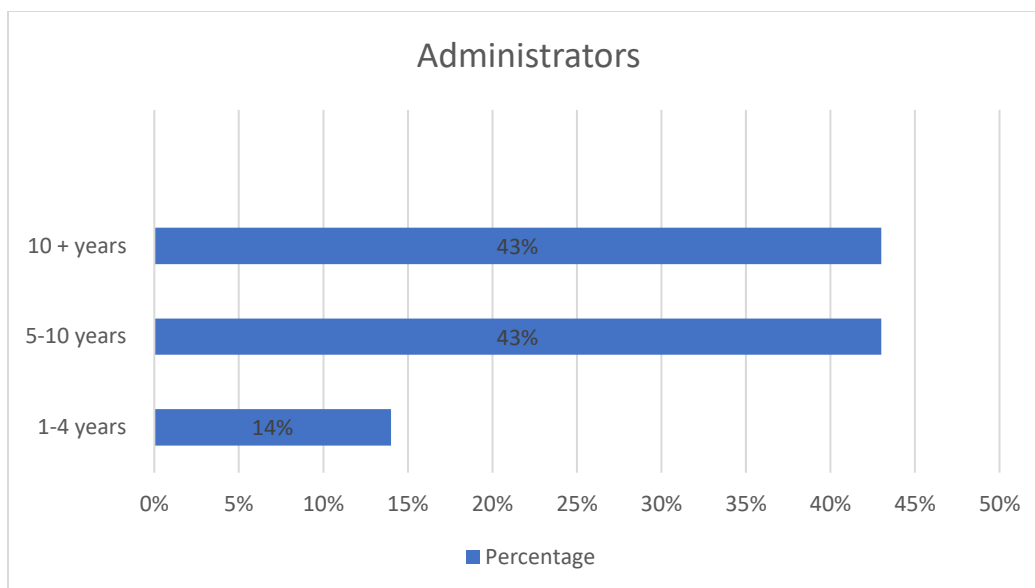


Fig. 3. Years in administration.

The schools surveyed ranged in enrollment from 1000 students to almost 3000 students. The schools in this study varied greatly when it came to demographics. Six schools had over forty-eight percent Hispanic and African American populations and two schools had an Asian population that exceeded forty percent. In five of the schools, over forty percent of the student body qualified for free and reduced lunch.

### *Research Instruments*

The researcher designed the electronic surveys using Google Forms. Electronic teacher and administrative surveys were sent to all participants in the study. The teacher survey included thirty-five questions for non-dance teachers and thirty-eight questions for dance teachers (see Appendix C). The multiple-choice questions allowed for responses of “strongly agree,” “agree,” “neutral,” “disagree,” and “strongly disagree.” Most questions were asked two different ways; one focused on the arts overall and the other isolated dance as the sole focus of inquiry. This method was used to help the researcher decipher

the effects dance had directly on the curricula versus the arts as a more general concept. The surveys were created to answer the research study's two research questions. The researcher had the teacher participants' surveys broken into sections. The first several questions gathered background information on the school and the teachers. The next sections in the survey were created to see teachers' perceptions about dance and the arts in their school. The questions also aimed to see how the arts affected the students in their current education, post-secondary education, and in a professional setting. Follow-up questions asked their opinions on collaboration and how often they would collaborate. The last section asked the teachers to answer questions about the value and climate of the arts in their school.

In the administrative questionnaire, the surveys consisted of twenty multiple choice questions structured the same way as the teacher surveys and three open ended questions (see Appendix D). The researcher sought to understand if collaboration was important to them and, if so, how they supported it. The short answer questions for the administrators sought details on what they felt made a strong arts program curriculum, what collaborations they witnessed, and what, if any, specific changes they saw in the student climate and participation since the addition of dance to their curriculum.

#### *Data Analysis Procedures*

After the completion of the study, the researcher analyzed the surveys completed by all the participants. The method of research used in this project was both qualitative and descriptive as the researcher used data from the surveys to identify themes and common ideas found in the responses in order to answer the research questions posed in the purpose section of this narrative. Selections included in the thesis writing did not

compromise the anonymity of those involved in the research. The names of each participant were changed to ensure confidentiality. All surveys were analyzed and significant data were used in writing the thesis.

### **Summary**

This chapter discussed the main themes of the study and the tools the researcher used to collect the data. The surveys were both quantitative and qualitative in nature and were given anonymously to both teacher and administrators who currently had dance in their performing arts curricula. Data collected helped the researcher discover emerging themes to guide in answering the questions. The outcomes for this study are provided in the discussion chapter of this thesis.

## CHAPTER IV

### DISCUSSION

As stated in the introductory chapter, the objective of this study was to examine the effects dance had on New Jersey public high schools' arts curricula and its students. The survey used for this study aimed to answer the researcher's two questions from the perspectives of both teachers and administrators with the hope of advocating for dance programming in New Jersey public schools. This chapter details the outcomes of the quantitative and qualitative data gathered from the anonymous surveys.

#### **Teacher Data**

Teachers from eleven schools that taught either music, theatre, dance, art, or a combination thereof were given an anonymous survey consisting of thirty-five to thirty-eight questions. Data were collected between December 2018 and April 2019.

#### *Analysis of Teacher Background Data*

At the time of the study, of the forty-two teachers surveyed, sixty-nine percent of them had been in public education for ten or more years, twenty-four percent had been in public education for five to ten years, and seven percent of the teachers were non-tenured, which in New Jersey is less than four years. The participants had diverse degrees in many different areas. In Figure 4, the data displays their college degrees, which ranged from a bachelor's degrees to various master's degrees. The majority of participants, with twenty-

eight percent, had a Bachelor of Arts degree, and eighteen percent held a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree (see Figure 4).

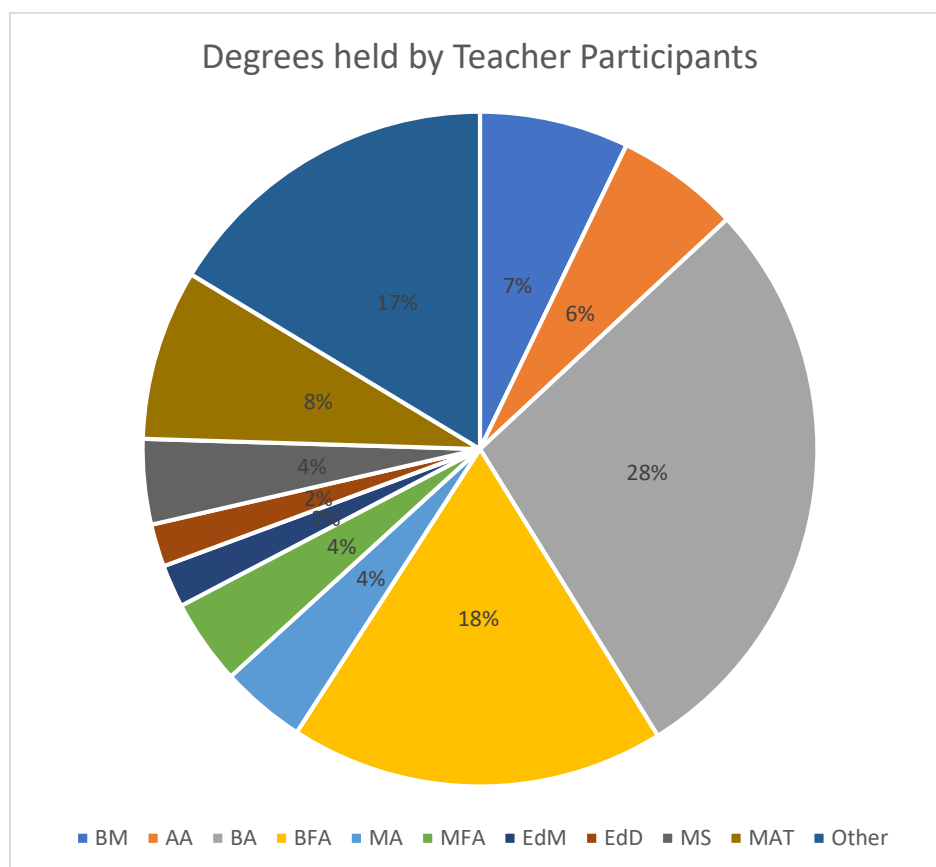


Fig. 4. Degrees held by teacher participants.

In Figure 5, the data show the participants majored in many different subject areas. The top percentage of teacher participants had degrees in dance and non-performing arts; both of these groups, individually, made up nineteen percent of the whole. The next highest percentage represented subject areas in music education or voice, with eighteen percent, and theatre arts with fourteen percent (see Figure 5).



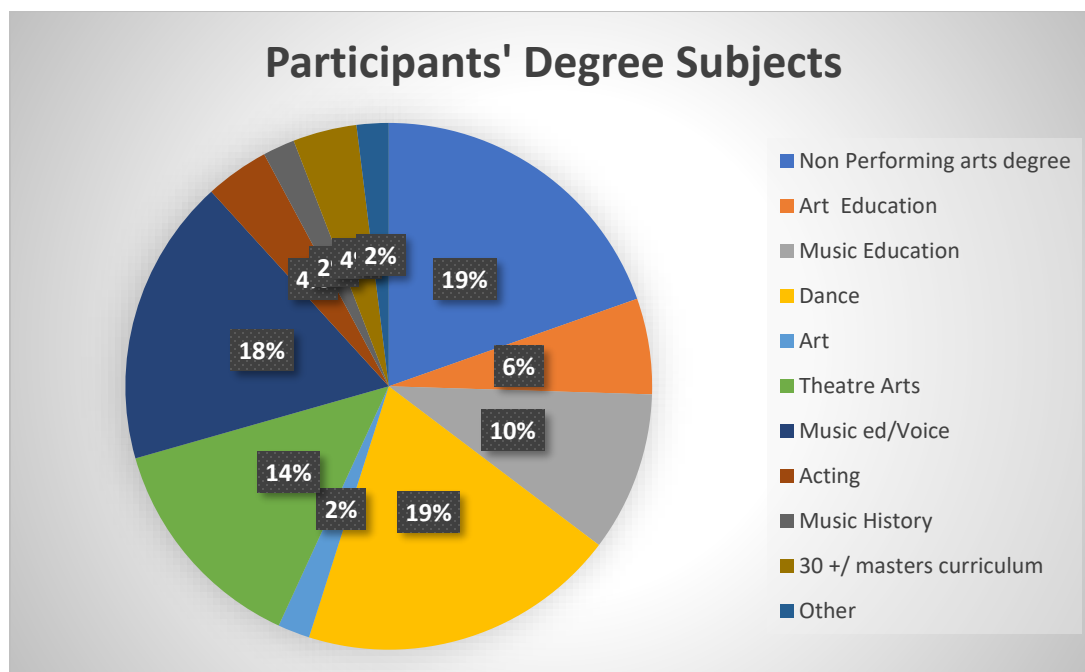


Fig. 5. Participants' degree subjects.

#### *Analysis of Dance Teacher Data*

After receiving the background data of the eleven teacher participants, the survey continued with questions specifically related to the dance teachers' working environment. As discussed in the previous chapter, of the eleven schools surveyed, seventy-six percent of schools had had dance for over six years, twelve percent had offered dance for three to five years, and the remaining twelve percent of schools had only had dance for one to three years. In response to the dance teacher survey question asking, "Do you have a proper dance room with mirrors, floors, and sound equipment?" four answered "no" and two of the four cited they had "broken mirrors." Six teachers responded "yes" and one dance teacher said, "They do now but they did not start with a proper room and are still without a sprung floor under the marley floor." In another question asking, "Is the

program you currently teach in housed in the arts department or the P.E. department?"

seven teachers stated they were part of the arts department and three were under the physical education department. However, only one participant had a degree that qualified for dance to be under their physical education department umbrella.

Outcomes to the above data demonstrated nearly half of the dance teachers surveyed did not have a proper dance room and were continually teaching in rooms insufficient for what was required for a dance room. Discrepancies were also found in the areas of licensing and curriculum as dance was supposed to fall under the fine and performing arts if taught by a licensed dance teacher. These findings showed inconsistencies were still occurring in dance education in the public-school system.

#### *Analysis of Classroom Time and Opportunity*

To understand the arts curriculum more clearly and answer the essential questions to this study, the researcher felt it necessary to investigate the amount of time each of the teachers had to instruct their students. Of the teachers surveyed, thirty-two percent spent less than two hundred minutes a week with their students and sixty-seven percent of teachers spent more than two hundred minutes a week with their students. The researcher then asked if the teachers felt the time they instructed their students was sufficient. The responses varied; sixty-four percent of the teachers felt they had enough time, sixteen percent answered "no," and the remaining twenty percent said, "It depends." After analyzing the data, a recurring theme that arose was many teachers felt they "made it work" because they planned accordingly to the time they had available but if given the option for more time, they would welcome it. These data showed the flexibility the

teachers exercised as well as the challenge a limited school period could have on teaching the arts.

The next set of questions focused on teacher participants' opinions of their students' collective ability to experience arts, specifically dance, during the school day. The participants were asked to rate the statements ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” The first statement they were asked to rate was "Students have the opportunity to experience dance during the school day if they were involved in other arts." The responses indicated that nineteen percent chose “strongly agree,” 45.2% chose “agree,” 14.3% answered “neutral,” and 16.7% chose “disagree.” However, when asked to rate the following statement: "The addition of dance in the school day creates competition, as students now must choose between more arts electives," many participants felt it did: nineteen percent answered “strongly agree” and 40.5% answered “agree” (see Figure 6).

### Arts Electives

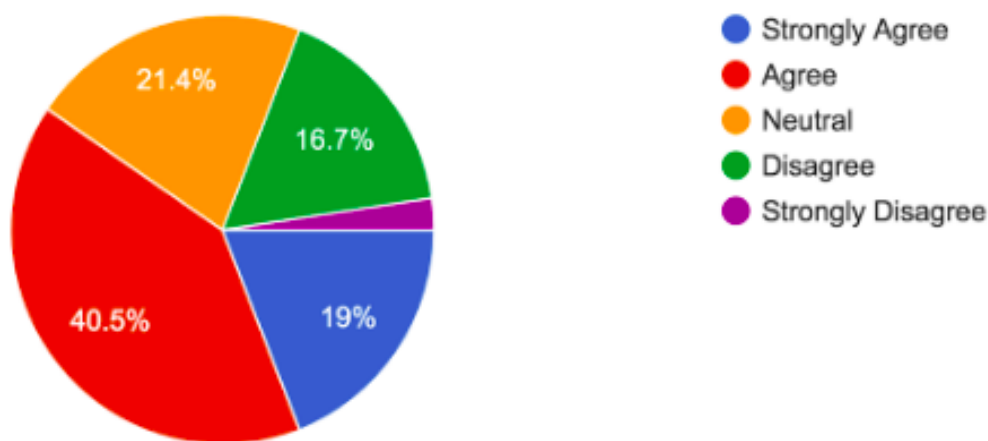


Fig. 6. Competition of electives.

The findings that emerged from these responses revealed the difficulty that students and teachers faced when incorporating the arts into the school day. All arts classes in New Jersey public high schools fall under the visual and performing arts elective requirement. The many graduation requirements New Jersey demands could often leave students, particularly underclassmen, with the choice of only one elective per year. This could continue to be a challenge as they entered the upper grades if they wanted to continue taking the same art form all four years for sequential study as oftentimes more advanced classes were offered only one time throughout the day.

In anticipation of this scheduling challenge, the researcher asked the participants to rate how they felt about the following statement: "Should students have more opportunities to experience arts electives during the school day?" Most arts teachers surveyed agreed students should have more opportunity for additional arts experiences. Figure 7 presents their responses.

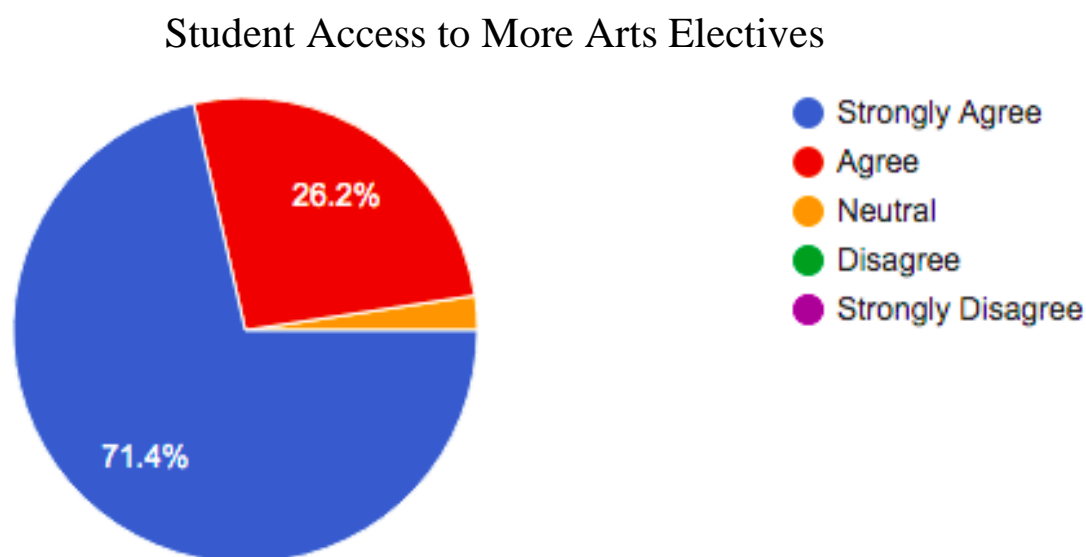


Fig. 7. Teachers' responses regarding student access to more arts electives.

### *Analysis of Teacher Perceptions of Arts Curriculum*

The researcher believed it was important to understand the perceptions teachers had about the arts and how they felt about dance in the arts curricula. To collect these data, the researcher asked the next statements in two ways: first by inquiring about the arts in general and then isolating dance as the sole focus of inquiry. Based on the results of these two statements: "Art programs are strengthened by students who have experience in multiple art disciplines" and "Offering dance in the arts curriculum has enhanced the other arts in my school," the responses were similar (see Figure 8).

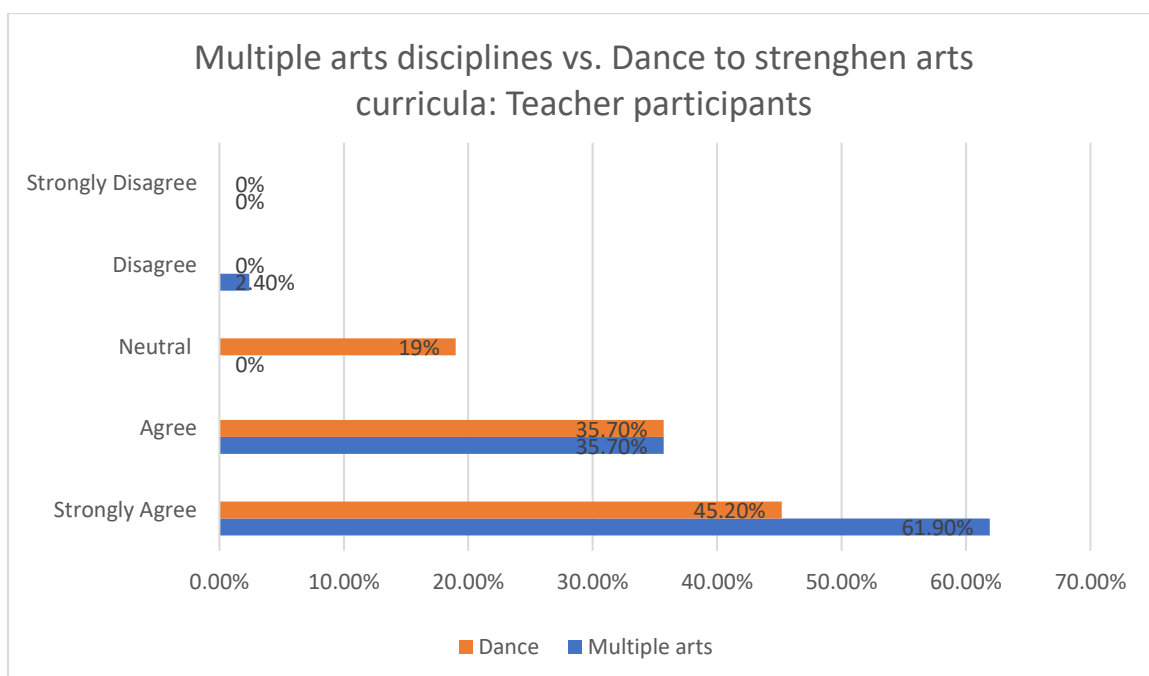


Fig. 8. Comparison of strength in multiple arts and dance: Teacher participants.

The participants were then asked to rate whether "Having multiple arts electives leads to better opportunities for students in a post-secondary education in the arts" and if "Having dance in the arts curricula leads to better opportunities for students in a post-

secondary education in the arts.” The comparison findings led the researcher to see how the responses changed when dance was isolated from the other arts. The comparisons to these responses can be found in Figure 9.

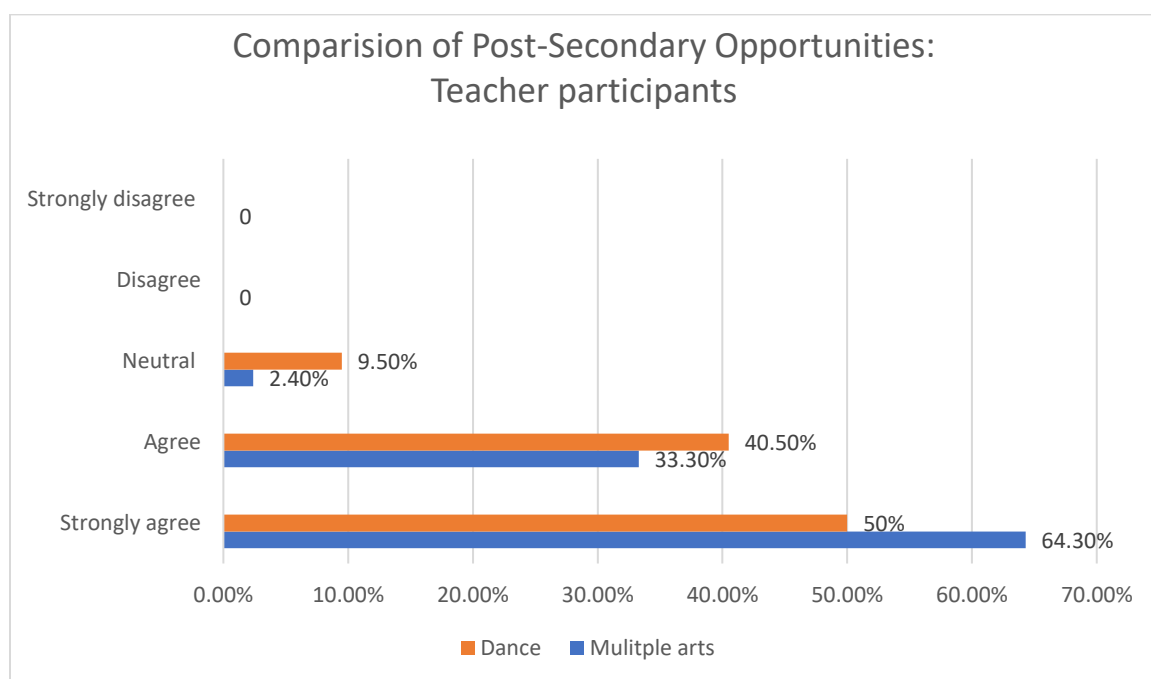


Fig. 9. Comparison of post-secondary opportunities within multiple arts and dance: Teacher participants.

After asking teachers to rate their responses about post-secondary opportunities for their students, the researcher went a step further to investigate how teachers felt about the opportunities the arts gave their students when it came to professional opportunities. The participants were then asked to rate whether "Having multiple arts electives leads to better opportunities for a student in a professional setting" and "Having dance in the arts curriculum leads to better opportunities for students in a professional setting." Similar to the previous question, the findings showed the differences when comparing multiple

electives and isolated dance as the focus. However, this time, the responses had a larger contrast when inquiring about professional opportunities (see Figure 10).

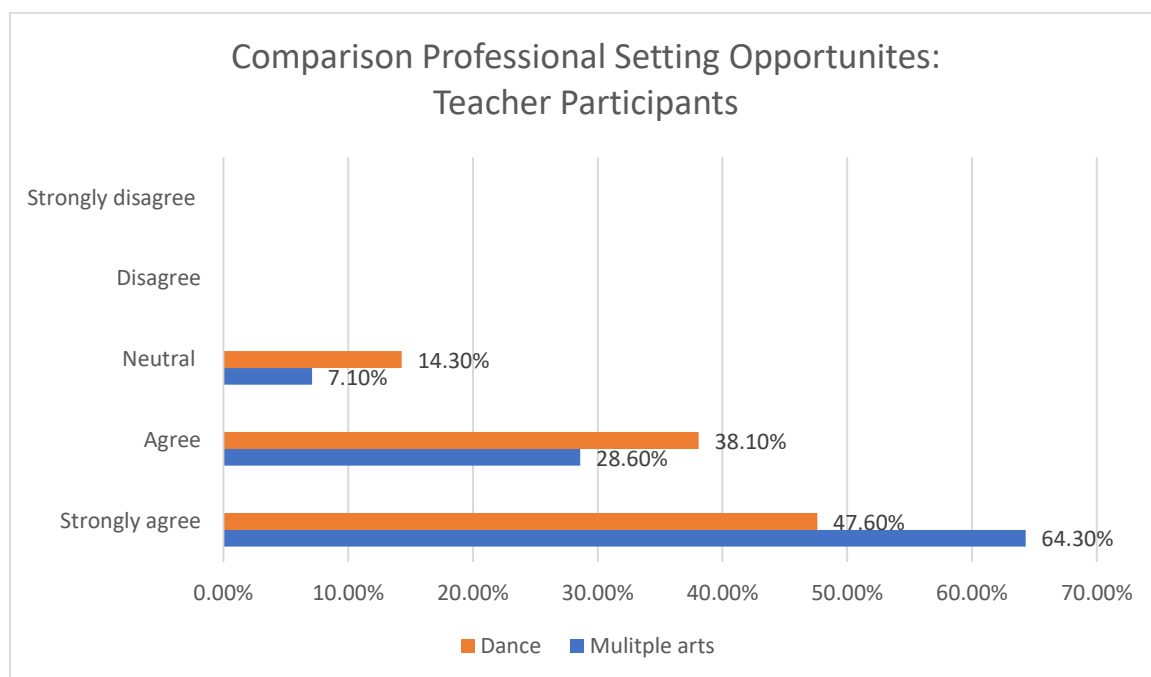


Fig. 10. Comparison of professional setting opportunities within multiple arts and dance: Teacher participants.

### *Analysis of School Climate*

The second essential question the researcher was investigating regarded school climate. To gain data on this subject, the researcher evaluated how climate was affected by the arts. When asking the participants about school climate, the researcher wanted to know the teachers' opinions about the following statement: "Other aspects of school activities have improved because of the addition of dance in the arts curriculum (i.e., marching band, cheerleading, step team, and the school musical)." The majority answered in the affirmative with either "strongly agree" or "agree" (see Figure 11).

### Addition of Dance to Arts Curriculum

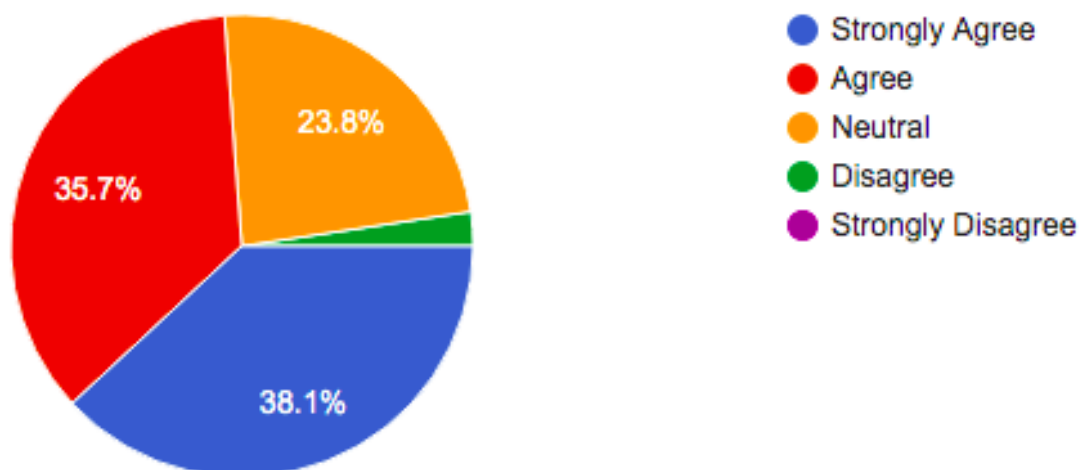


Fig. 11. Teachers' responses regarding school climate based on the addition of dance.

#### *Analysis of Teachers' Collaboration Data*

Collaboration has been said to be a cornerstone for 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and the benefits include creativity, communication, and critical thinking (Schupp 152). Nationally recognized dance education advocate and consultant Brenda Pugh McCutchen stated arts collaborations should be a natural course of study when teaching dance in public education. Teachers have been known to find many ways to collaborate, often integrating multiple art forms while teaching their own specialized discipline. The researcher sought to get data on this subject to be able to attain outcomes of her essential question on collaboration.

Teachers were asked to rate the following collaboration statements from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." The first two statements they were asked to rate were as follows: "I can collaborate with my arts teachers during the school day" and "I can



collaborate with my arts teachers in after school activities." The outcomes to these statements are found Figure 12, which compares the two statements on collaboration in and out of school.

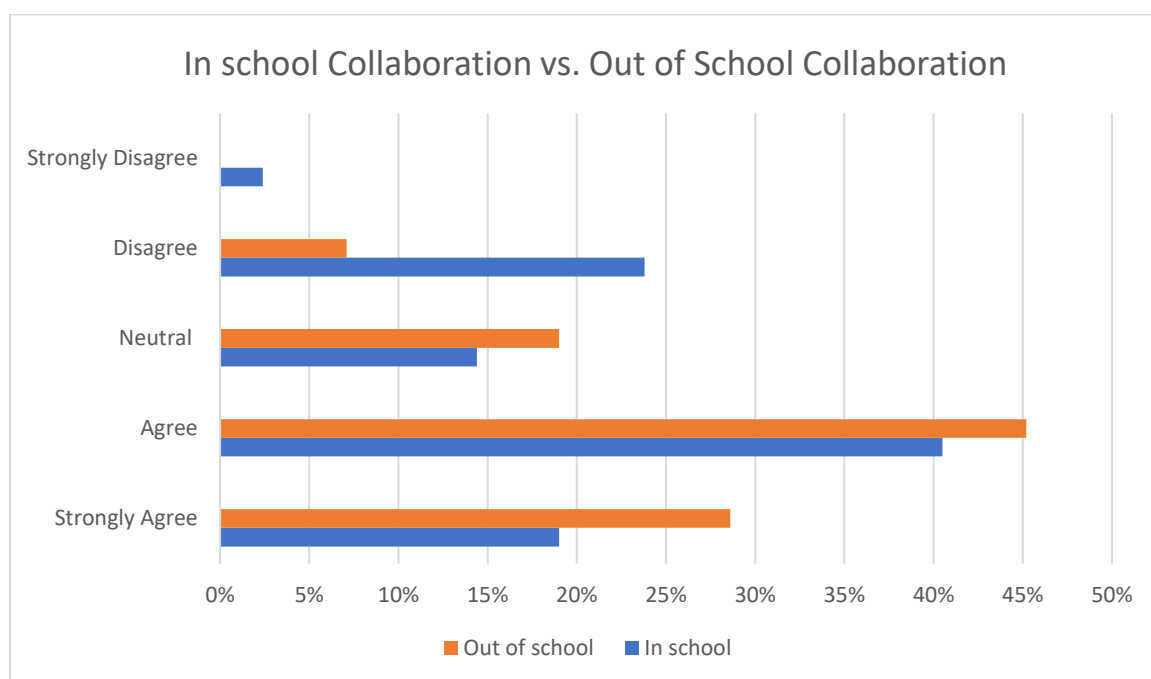


Fig. 12. Time allotted in school versus out of school collaboration.

The researcher then looked at the time allotted for these collaborations to happen. When collaboration happened during school, twenty-eight percent of teacher participants met one to two times a week while thirty-three percent met one to two times a month. Although these numbers did not appear to be a large amount of time to collaborate, most participants felt it was important to collaborate. When asked to rate the following statement "As a teacher I find art collaboration beneficial to my students," thirty-eight percent stated they "strongly agreed" while forty-seven percent "agreed." Eleven percent were "neutral" and two percent "disagreed" with this statement.

The researcher also sought to interpret how teachers used integration of the arts in their classroom. The researcher had the participants rate the following statements: "I use another art other than what I currently teach as a vehicle to introduce and enhance other arts subjects" and "I use dance as a vehicle to introduce and enhance other arts subjects." When dance was isolated as the sole focus of inquiry, the outcomes were quite different (see Figure 13).

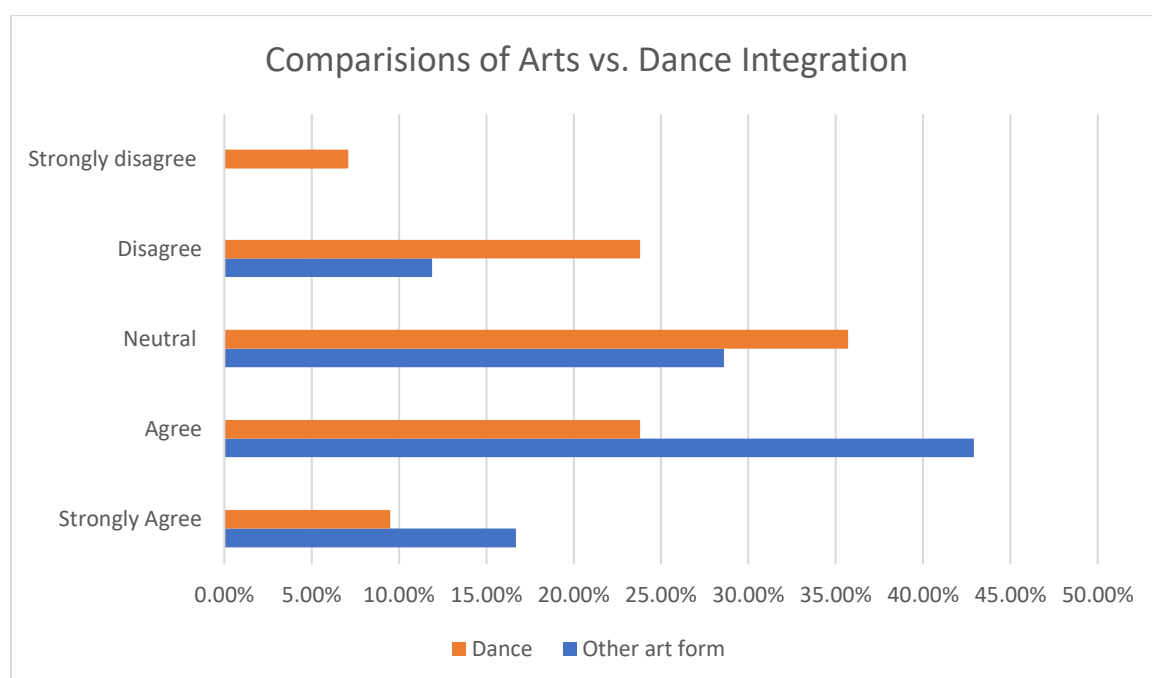


Fig. 13. Comparisons of arts versus dance in integration.

Continuing to examine integration, the researcher wanted to know how often teacher participants used integration of the arts and dance in their classes. When asked how often they used art as a vehicle to introduce and enhance the other arts, the participants had the choice to answer one time a week, two times a month, monthly, or other. The majority answered they utilized the arts to introduce other content monthly

while the other group of participants said they utilized the arts to introduce other content two to four times per month. Some teachers responded, "Typically in dance history units"; one teacher who taught theatre and music said, "All the time, as I am incorporating music all the time in theatre class"; and yet another teacher stated it was more "projects based." When asked how often they used dance as a vehicle to enhance and introduce other arts, a majority (forty-two percent) selected the choice of "other." Some individuals stated it was more "project based," while another stated, "When the need arises," and one participant wrote, "Music appreciation has a unit on dance." Another participant responded he/she used it "all the time to connect writing and history."

For collaboration to be successful, there must be a healthy comradery between those engaging in collaborative work and to gauge the overall climate among teachers. When the researcher posited the survey statement: "The arts are valued at my school," the response was overwhelmingly "agree" (see Figure 14).

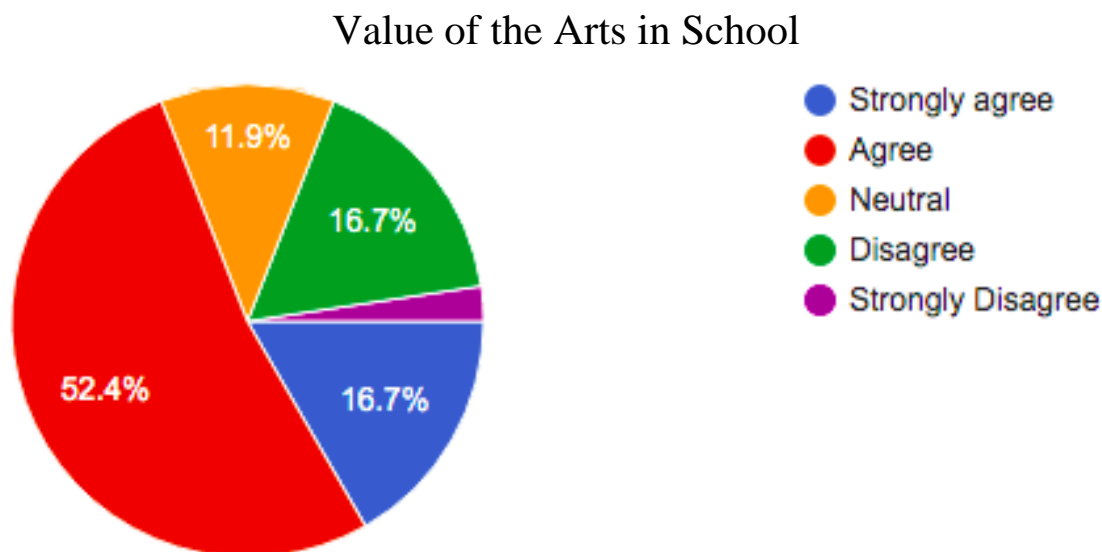


Fig. 14. Teachers' responses regarding value of the arts in their school.

When given the statement "I feel the arts are valued at my school because," the teacher participants had the following choices: "There is a strong audience turn out," "There is adequate funding," "There is a strong parental support," "There is a strong administrative support," "All of the above," "N/A," or "Other." Thirty-two and a half percent replied, "All of the above." Other responses given were the students were engaged and excited to have an arts option, there is a strong feeder program from the middle schools, and students love and desire the arts.

When posed with a question regarding the overall feeling of support by other arts teachers in their department, the majority felt supported (see Figure 15).

### Support from Colleagues

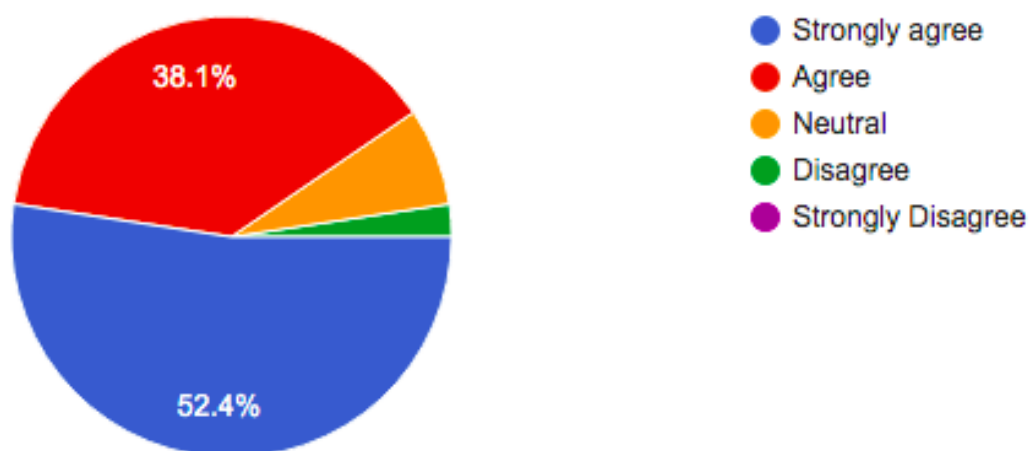


Fig. 15. Teachers' responses regarding support from colleagues.

The researcher also sought out whether the participants attended other arts teachers' events. Most answered that they did (see Figure 16).

### Teacher Attendance at Colleague Performances

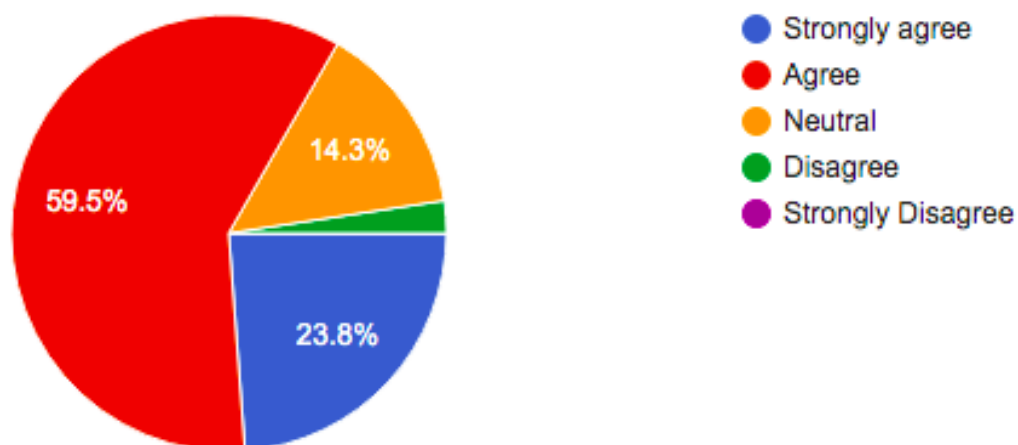


Fig. 16. Teacher attendance for colleagues' performances.

The last statement on climate was "I am included in the program's vision and curriculum." The majority agreed with this statement (see Figure 17).

### Inclusion in Vision and Curriculum

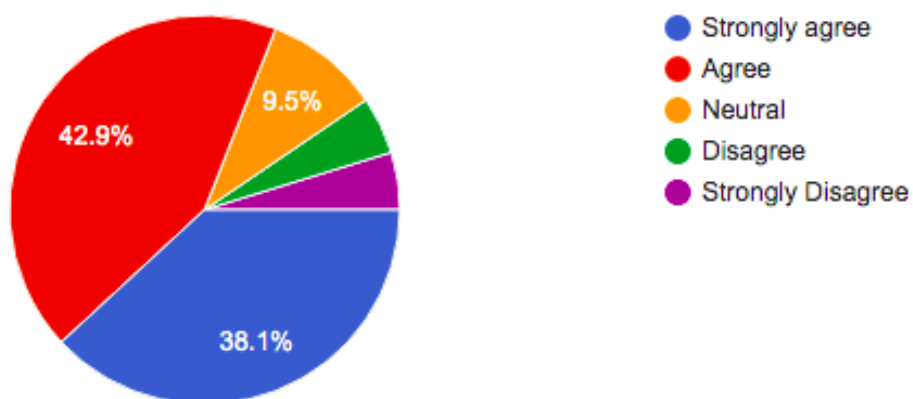


Fig. 17. Teachers' responses regarding inclusion in vision and curriculum.

This study gathered data on how teachers were evaluated in their building to reveal who was giving them feedback. The teacher participants were asked: "Who evaluates you?" Of the teachers surveyed, forty-five percent said they were evaluated by the arts supervisor and the rest answered it was a combination of their supervisor and vice-principals. In New Jersey, non-tenured teachers must have a total of three observations and tenured teachers are required to have two observations per year. The observations must be completed by different administrators. Outcomes of this answer supported this requirement. The data also found 59.5% of teacher participants were not evaluated on the performances they presented, thirty one percent said sometimes, while 9.5% said performances were a factor.

### **Administrator Data**

Eight administrators from eight schools participated in this study. The anonymous survey consisted of twenty-three questions. Data were collected between December 2018 and April 2019. Ten surveys were sent and eight were returned.

#### *Analysis of Administrator Background Data*

Of the eight administrators surveyed, seven were arts supervisors and one was an assistant or vice-principal. In their current educational positions, three participants had been administrators for ten or more years, two participants had been in their position for five to ten years, and three participants had been in their current position for one to four years. When asked how long they had been administrators beyond their current position, four participants had been administrators for over ten years, three participants had been administrators for five to ten years, and one had been an administrator for one to four years.

*Analysis of Administrator Data*

Data collected from administrators evaluated many of the same questions from the teacher survey but from an administrator's point of view. Asking many of the same questions allowed the researcher to compare the opinions of the administrators and teachers. It also provided information on directives teachers received from their supervisors and how this shaped the outcomes of many of their thoughts and decisions in the classroom.

The following statements were asked to be rated by participating administrators from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” In response to the following statement "The addition of dance in the school day creates competition, as students now must choose between more arts electives," twenty-five percent chose “strongly agree,” 12.5% chose “agree,” twenty-five percent were “neutral,” and 37.5% chose “disagree.”

When asked to rate the following statement “Other aspects of school activities have improved because of the addition of dance in the arts curriculum," 37.5% chose “strongly agree,” fifty percent chose “agree,” and 12.5% were “neutral.”

When asked to rate the statement "The arts department in my building is well rounded because of the addition of dance in the arts curriculum," one hundred percent strongly agreed.

The researcher asked the administrators to rate the following statements: "Offering dance in the arts curriculum at my school has enhanced the other arts in my school" and "Art programs are strengthened by students who have experience in multiple art disciplines." The researcher compared these two responses and how different they were when isolating dance as the focus of the statement. Many administrators felt having

dance had enhanced many other aspects of their school and one hundred percent agreed dance made the curricula well-rounded (see Figure 18).

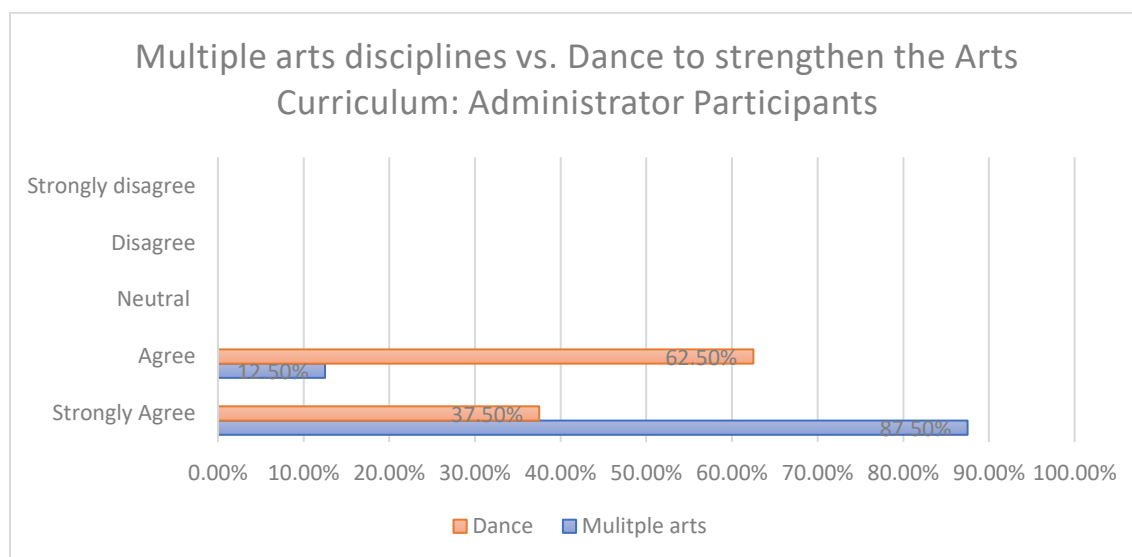


Fig. 18. Comparison of strength within multiple arts and dance: Administrator participants.

However, when looking at Figure 19, the responses did not seem to match previous responses where administrators agreed one hundred percent that dance had both enhanced many other aspects of their school and made the curriculum well-rounded. In addition, when looking at the data from Figure 18, the administrators did not feel as strong about dance when asked if dance had enhanced the other arts in their curricula, yet felt strongly students with multiple arts training strengthened the arts programs. This was an interesting difference when isolating the focus of dance in the statement.

The administrator participants were then asked to rate whether "Having multiple arts electives leads to better opportunities for students in a post-secondary education in



the arts" and if "Having dance in the arts curricula leads to better opportunities for students in a post-secondary education in the arts" (see Figure 19).

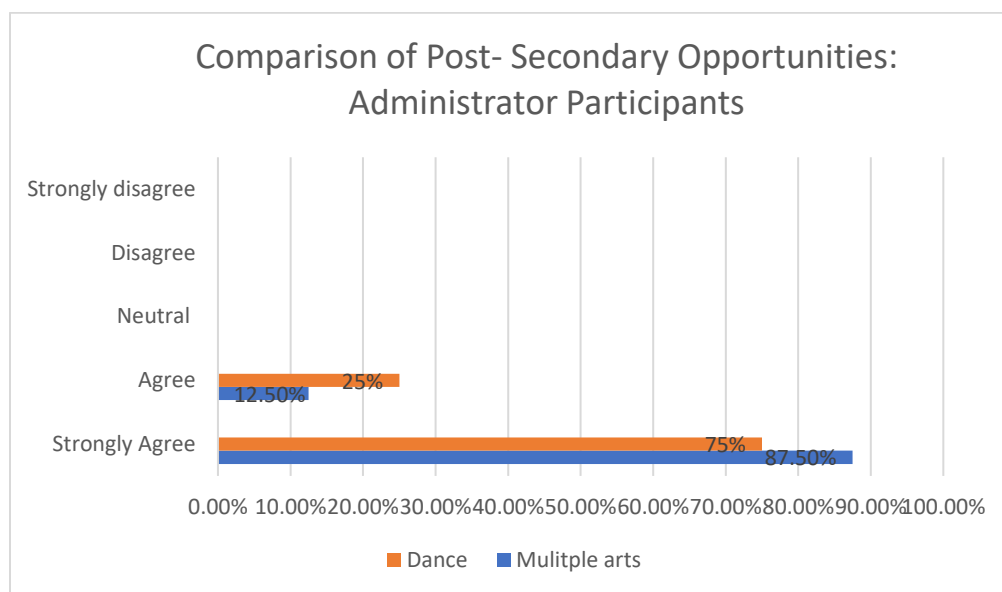


Fig. 19. Comparison of post-secondary opportunities within multiple arts and dance.

Continuing this analysis, the researcher asked about professional opportunities for the students with the following statements: "Having multiple arts electives leads to better opportunities for students in a professional setting" and "Having dance in the arts curricula leads to better opportunities for students in a professional setting." Once again, the outcome was administrators felt stronger about multiple arts rather than focusing on dance when responding to this statement (see Figure 20).

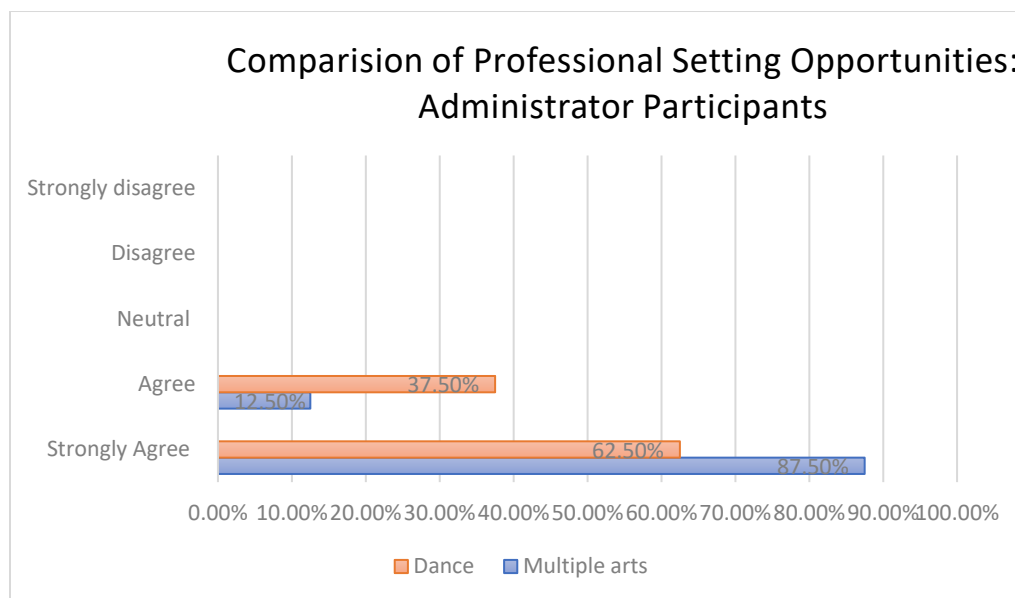


Fig. 20. Comparison of professional setting opportunities within multiple arts and dance: Administrator participants.

#### *Analysis of Administrators' Collaboration Data*

The administrator participants were asked to rate statements pertaining to collaboration and their roles regarding accommodations of time with the teachers they supervised. When posed with the statement "Arts teachers are encouraged and provided regular time to collaborate with one another," 37.5% strongly agreed, 37.5% agreed, 12.5% percent were neutral, and 12.5% percent disagreed. When comparing this to teacher data, there were some discrepancies as only nineteen percent of teachers strongly agreed they could collaborate during the school day compared to the 37.5% of administrators who strongly agreed. In the agree category, it was relatively similar.

In the previous teacher data survey, many participants stated their evaluations were not based on their students' performances. When asked whether the administrators evaluated them based on their students' performances, 12.5% of the teacher participants

agreed with that statement, 62.5% responded neutral, and twenty-five percent disagreed. Although most teachers were not evaluated on their students' performances, the research sought to examine how many administrators came to support their performances. When posed with the statement "I attend most shows and events that include the arts," seventy-five percent of administrators strongly agreed and twenty-five percent agreed. Lastly, the administrators were asked if they were included in and attended performing and visual arts department meetings and one hundred percent responded "strongly agree." They also unanimously stated they strongly agreed they supported arts field trips.

#### *Qualitative Administrator Data*

Administrators give guidance, support, and instructions to their teachers. To achieve the researcher's goal of having this study help to advocate for dance in New Jersey public high school arts curricula, she deemed it necessary to ask questions that let the administrators expand on their experiences. The researcher asked three open-ended questions of the eight administrator participants.

The first question asked was "What have you noticed about the school's overall climate that has changed since adding dance to the curriculum. In other words, do you find more support and participation of the arts overall within the student body?" A few could not respond to this question as they had had dance the entire time they were supervisors but they did feel there was support for the program and felt students enjoyed it. The overall theme was some students who might have not been involved in the arts because of lack of interest became involved when dance was added. Dance helped to attract some of those students and helped them find their passion in the arts. One supervisor wrote, "Students who would not have taken art or music courses are taking

dance. This helps to address students who would have fallen through the cracks if not for dance opportunities." Another supervisor wrote, "Dance gives our students an opportunity to develop their passion/talent while completing their high school diploma." One supervisor praised his dance teacher for the success of the program stating,

I think the overall school climate has improved since we added dance, but I think a large part of that is the dance teacher and her outgoing, engaging personality, and collaborative style. To build community and improve climate you must have staff that believes that's important. It's not just about the technical aspects of the art, its about how we share it and engage other in the work.

The second question asked of the administrators was "What are some collaborations that you have seen at your school?" Many stated things like marching band, plays, and musical collaborations. One of the other respondents stated the arts collaborated multiple times on multicultural days such as Martin Luther King Day and the Holocaust Night of Remembrance. Another theme that was evident was how many times collaboration happened within the community. Some administrators cited examples of an "arts day where the whole day is dedicated to highlighting and showcasing student's skills with all of the arts," opportunities for guest speakers and outside artists to come in and provide opportunities for students to work with those out in the field, and working with the lower schools in the district.

The final survey request posed to the administrators was "Name the top three reasons you feel make an arts program successful." Many cited proper facilities, administration, school and community support, as well as support from the Board of Education. One administrator summed up his/her feelings by stating, "A well-rounded

arts curriculum and providing as much as we can for our students." Many also wrote of the importance of qualified, inspirational, and passionate teachers who provided highly effective instruction. One administrator stated, "Teachers that are also artists who inspire students by modeling best practices." Collaboration and creativity were also themes of some of the responses as well as "performance opportunities for the students."

### **Summary**

The intent of the data results was to show prevalent outcomes when dance was added to an arts curriculum and the ways in which inter-arts collaborations offered value to a school's climate and its students. The overall outcomes of the data were many teachers found dance was an important part of an arts curriculum but also found competition with the other arts when trying to fit dance into a student's school day. Many of the teachers felt students should have more opportunity to experience arts electives during the school day. Most teachers and administrators found the arts beneficial to students in both post-secondary education and professional settings. Teachers and administrators felt strongly that students who had experiences in multiple arts made the art programs stronger and some felt the addition of dance had strengthened the arts curriculum as well. The data collected on collaboration revealed how important administrators and teachers felt it was. Discrepancies were found between the teachers and administrators regarding the amount of time they incorporated collaboration throughout the school day. Most administrators gave many examples of the value in having the arts collaborate; however, when looking at the amount of time the teachers were given it did not appear to be significant. The outcomes of school climate and value of the arts were positive from both teachers and administrators, which could only give us

hope that with many successful programs, dance could be added and be deemed as important as the other arts.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

As previously mentioned, the goal of this study was to advocate for dance programming in New Jersey public high schools' arts curricula. This study also sought to analyze the overall impact of student growth and appreciation of the arts. The final chapter of the thesis restates the research question, reviews the methodology used, summarizes the findings, discusses limitations to the study, and provides recommendations for further research.

#### **Research Question and Methods**

The following research questions were used to guide this study:

- Q1     What outcomes are prevalent when dance is added to a New Jersey public school arts curriculum?
- Q2     In what ways do inter-arts collaboration offer value to a school's climate and it's students?

As explained in chapter three, the methodology used in this study was an anonymous electronic survey sent to all participants. Two different surveys were administered: one for arts teachers and one for public school administrators. The participants included forty-two arts teachers and eight administrators in New Jersey public high schools. The teacher survey was comprised of quantitative sections while the administrative survey was quantitative with three qualitative open-ended responses. The surveys sought to identify perceptions of the arts, the art of dance within the curriculum, collaboration, and value of the arts and how it affected students and the schools' climates.

## **Interpretation of the Findings**

Analysis of the quantitative results of the teachers surveyed presented many interesting findings. Of the eleven schools that participated in this study, seventy-six percent had had dance as part of the curriculum for over six years while twelve percent had had dance for three to five years, and the remaining twelve percent of schools had had dance for less than three years. When isolating the eleven dance teachers surveyed, only six had a proper dance room to teach in and all but one were housed in the arts department. These findings displayed how new dance still was in many of the arts curricula in public education.

The outcomes of this study showed most arts teachers surveyed saw value in having a dance program in the arts curriculum and one hundred percent of administrators said their program was well-rounded because of the addition of dance. However, 59.5% of the teachers felt that having dance as another arts elective created some competition when students already had limited access to arts electives. Administrators seemed split on this statement.

Over seventy percent of teachers surveyed felt students should have more opportunity to experience arts electives during the school day. However, with state graduation requirements, it was extremely difficult to fit in multiple arts electives and even harder to do so if a student wanted to continue a specific art all four years. When analyzing the time teachers had with their students, sixty-seven percent spent over two hundred minutes a week or three hours with their students while thirty-two percent spent less than two hundred minutes.



When asked about their perceptions of the arts, teachers felt strongly that the arts strengthened student's opportunities both in post-secondary education as well as in professional settings. When investigating teacher perceptions further about isolating dance as the focus, the responses were more neutral. This was not the case in the administrator's surveys as their answers were similar to the teachers when asked to compare multiple arts and then focus on dance regarding post-secondary and professional opportunities.

In analyzing the findings regarding school climate data, most teachers and administrators saw value in collaborating and many administrators cited successful collaborations they had seen. The discrepancies between the teachers and administrators were apparent when asked how much time teachers were allotted to collaborate. Many administrators felt teachers had regular time to collaborate but when looking at the data of the time teachers spent collaborating, especially during school hours, it was very rare, with most only being able to collaborate one to two times a month. Teachers were also asked how often they used another art other than the one they taught as a vehicle to introduce and enhance other subjects. Most felt they did; however, most did not use dance to explore inter-arts collaboration.

Teachers responded positively to the questions about school climate. Over sixty percent of teachers felt the arts were valued at their school and felt they had support from other arts teachers and their administrators. Teachers also felt included in the vision and curriculum of the program. Having a positive work environment is crucial in successful collaboration; administrators also saw the importance of this as one hundred percent said

they supported arts field trips and attended performances and visual and performing arts meetings.

### **Limitations to the Study**

Some of the limitations to this study had to do with the small sample size of forty-two teachers and only eight administrators as well as only involving those at the high school level. A larger sample size and adding input from grades kindergarten through sixth would significantly add to the data and validity of the study. Another limitation was access to participants. The researcher found dance teachers were easily accessible and willing to participate; however, there was hesitation from their colleagues when approached to contribute to the study. Another limitation occurred when within the same school there was no full participation within the arts teachers and some schools did not offer all four art forms.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

In the state of New Jersey, there are many restrictions on students regarding arts electives because of graduation requirements. A deeper investigation regarding arts requirements would be useful to analyze how the addition of more opportunities in the arts could shape an arts curriculum even further as well as a student's ability to experience multiple arts in the school day. A similar study adding kindergarten through sixth grades would be insightful to investigate how the integration of all four art forms might shape the perceptions of both students and teachers about the arts and its place in the public education system.

**Conclusion**

The arts have been in public education for many years; however, dance in New Jersey public high schools is still one of the last of the arts disciplines to enter the arts curriculum. With more accessibility to watch dance via social media, dance has gained a greater audience, especially with students. Dance in the schools can be seen in marching bands, cheerleading, and school musicals; yet, classes are still not offered in most New Jersey high schools.

The ability to experience all four arts disciplines within the schools has made an impact on students, teachers, and administrators in school climate; value in the arts; collaboration; and students' opportunities. Continuing to add dance to New Jersey high school arts curricula would add positive experiences and opportunities for future generations of teachers and students as well as create strong arts curricula.

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APPENDIX A  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



*Institutional Review Board*

DATE: November 13, 2018

TO: Vicki Jenkins

FROM: University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB

PROJECT TITLE: [1332472-2] The Missing Art: Dance Advocacy and Inter-Arts Collaboration in New Jersey Public High Schools

SUBMISSION TYPE: Amendment/Modification

ACTION: APPROVAL/VERIFICATION OF EXEMPT STATUS

DECISION DATE: November 13, 2018

EXPIRATION DATE: November 13, 2022

Thank you for your submission of Amendment/Modification materials for this project. The University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB approves this project and verifies its status as EXEMPT according to federal IRB regulations.

We will retain a copy of this correspondence within our records for a duration of 4 years.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Morse at 970-351-1910 or [nicole.morse@unco.edu](mailto:nicole.morse@unco.edu). Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB's records.



## APPENDIX B

### CONSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH: TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR VERSIONS



CONSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO  
Teacher Version

Project Title: The Missing Art: Dance Advocacy and Inter-Arts Collaboration in New Jersey Public High Schools  
 Researcher: Vicki Jenkins Graduate students at the University of Northern Colorado  
 E-mail: Jenk2746@bears.unco.edu  
 Research Advisor: Christy O'Connell-Black, University of Northern Colorado,  
 E-Mail: christy.black@unco.edu

**Purpose and Description:** The aim of this research is to discover the outcomes that dance has on New Jersey public high school arts curriculums and their students. The research will attempt to answer the following questions: 1) What outcomes are prevalent when dance is added to a New Jersey public school arts curriculum? 2) In what ways does inter arts collaborations offer value to a school's climate? As part of the graduate thesis project, this research will help advocate for more dance programming in the state of New Jersey, as well as focus on the effects amongst inter arts collaborations at the high school level and how this can impact student growth and overall appreciation for the arts. Data collection will be done in one semester using an anonymous teacher survey, distributed and collected electronically. The questionnaire will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Data will be analyzed for this study and kept in a locked cabinet at the researcher's home. All consent forms will be stored in Crabbe Hall, room 308, the office of Christy O'Connell-Black, Dance Education MA co-coordinator. Data can consent forms will be destroyed after three years.

The risks associated with this research are no more than what the potential participant would experience in everyday life. Participants will be made aware that they are able to pause and save progress at any time during the survey process. Surveys will be completed and collected anonymously then later coded. Other possible risks may be emotional stress to answering a question they may have an emotional connection to. Questions have been worded in an unbiased way that will allow the participant to answer honestly. Although it will be recommended to complete the entire survey, participants will have the option to skip a question.

Participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate in this study and if you begin participation you may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Having read the above and having had an opportunity to ask any questions, please sign below if you would like to participate in this research. A copy of this form will be given to you to retain for future reference. If you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, please contact Nicole Morse, Office of Research, Kepner Hall, University of Northern Colorado Greeley, CO 80639; 970-351-1910.

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Subject's Signature Date

---

Researcher's Signature Date



**CONSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH**  
**UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO**  
 Administrator Version

Project Title: The Missing Art: Dance Advocacy and Inter-Arts Collaboration in New Jersey Public High Schools  
 Researcher: Vicki Jenkins Graduate students at the University of Northern Colorado  
 E-mail: [Jenk2746@bears.unco.edu](mailto:Jenk2746@bears.unco.edu)  
 Research Advisor: Christy O'Connell-Black, University of Northern Colorado,  
 E-Mail: [christy.black@unco.edu](mailto:christy.black@unco.edu)

**Purpose and Description:** The aim of this research is to discover the outcomes that dance has on New Jersey public high school arts curriculums and their students. The research will attempt to answer the following questions: 1) What outcomes are prevalent when dance is added to a New Jersey public school arts curriculum? 2) In what ways does inter arts collaborations offer value to a school's climate? As part of the graduate thesis project, this research will help advocate for more dance programming in the state of New Jersey, as well as focus on the effects amongst inter arts collaborations at the high school level and how this can impact student growth and overall appreciation for the arts. Data collection will be done in one semester using an anonymous teacher survey, distributed and collected electronically. The questionnaire will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Data will be analyzed for this study and kept in a locked cabinet at the researcher's home. All consent forms will be stored in Crabbe Hall, room 308, the office of Christy O'Connell-Black, Dance Education MA co-coordinator. Data can consent forms will be destroyed after three years.

The risks associated with this research are no more than what the potential participant would experience in everyday life. Participants will be made aware that they are able to pause and save progress at any time during the survey process. Surveys will be completed and collected anonymously then later coded. Other possible risks may be emotional stress to answering a question they may have an emotional connection to. Questions have been worded in an unbiased way that will allow the participant to answer honestly. Although it will be recommended to complete the entire survey, participants will have the option to skip a question.

Participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate in this study and if you begin participation you may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Having read the above and having had an opportunity to ask any questions, please sign below if you would like to participate in this research. A copy of this form will be given to you to retain for future reference. If you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, please contact Nicole Morse, Office of Research, Kepner Hall, University of Northern Colorado Greeley, CO 80639; 970-351-1910.

---

Subject's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

---

Researcher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX C  
TEACHER SURVEY QUESTIONS

## Teacher Survey Questions

Teacher background questions

Email address

School Name

Which subject do you teach?

- ☐ Dance
- ☐ Art
- ☐ Theatre
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Choir
- ☐ Other:

How many years have you been teaching in public education?

How many years have you been teaching in your current position?

What degree(s) do you hold?

What is your degree in?

How many minutes do you get with each class per week?

Do you feel the amount of time you get with each class is sufficient to teach your planned lessons?

If you teach dance please answer the following 3 questions, if you do not please check or write in N/A

How many years has dance been offered in your current school curriculum?

- ☐ 1-3 years
- ☐ 4-6 years
- ☐ Over 6 years
- ☐ N/A

Do you have a proper dance room with mirrors, floors, and sound equipment?

Is the dance program you currently teach in under the arts department or the P.E. department?

- ☐ Arts
- ☐ P.E.
- ☐ Other
- ☐ N/A

Offering dance in the arts curriculum at my school has enhanced the other arts in my school.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Art programs are strengthened by students who have experience in multiple art disciplines.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Students have an opportunity to experience dance during the school day if they are involved in other arts.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

The addition of dance in the school day creates competition, as students now must choose between more arts electives.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Other aspects of the school activities have improved because of the addition of dance in the arts curriculum. (i.e. marching band, cheer leading, step team, school musical)

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Having multiple arts electives leads to better opportunities for students in a post-secondary education in the arts.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Having dance in the arts curriculum leads to better opportunities for students in a post-secondary education in the arts.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Having multiple arts electives leads to better opportunities for students in a professional setting.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Having dance in the arts curriculum leads to better opportunities for students in a professional setting.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Students should have more opportunities to experience arts electives.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I can collaborate with my arts teachers during the school day.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

If you do collaborate with other arts teachers during the school day how often do you do so?

- ☐ More than 1 time a week
- ☐ 2 times a month
- ☐ 1 time a month
- ☐ Other

I can collaborate with my arts teachers in after school activities.

Strongly Agree

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

If you collaborate with other arts teachers in after school activities how often do you do so?

- ☐ More than 1 time a week
- ☐ 2 times a month
- ☐ 1 time a month
- ☐ Other

As a teacher, I find arts collaboration (teaching a lesson with another arts teacher) beneficial to the students.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

The arts are valued at my school.

Strongly agree

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

I feel the arts are valued at my school because

- ☐ There is strong audience turn out
- ☐ There is adequate funding
- ☐ There is strong parental support
- ☐ There is strong administrative support
- ☐ All the above
- ☐ N/A
- ☐ Other



I use another art other than what I currently teach as a vehicle to introduce and enhance other art subjects.

Strongly agree

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

If you use another art other than what you currently teach as a vehicle to introduce and enhance other art subjects how often do you do so?

- ☐ 1 time a week
- ☐ 2 times a month
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Other

I use dance as a vehicle to introduce and enhance other arts subjects?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

If you use dance as a vehicle to introduce and enhance other arts subjects how often do you do so?

- ☐ 1 time a week
- ☐ 2 times a month
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Other

Who evaluates you?

- ☐ Arts supervisor
- ☐ Principal
- ☐ Assistant or vice principal
- ☐ P.E. supervisor
- ☐ Other

Are you evaluated based on performances that your program presents?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ No

Do you feel supported by the other arts teachers in your department?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

I attend other arts teachers' events.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

I am included in the programs vision and curriculum.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

A copy of your responses will be emailed to the address you provided.

APPENDIX D  
ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY QUESTIONS

## Administrator Survey Questions

Background questions

Email address

School Name

What is your current job placement?

- ☐ Arts supervisor
- ☐ P.E. supervisor
- ☐ Principal
- ☐ Assistant or vice principal
- ☐ Other

How many years have you been an administrator?

How many years have you been in your current position?

Offering dance in the arts curriculum at my school has enhanced the other arts in my school.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Art programs are strengthened by students who have experience in multiple art disciplines.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

The addition of dance in the school day creates competition, as students now must choose between more arts electives.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Other aspects of the school activities have improved because of the addition of dance in the arts curriculum. (i.e. marching band, cheer leading, step team, school musical)

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Having multiple arts electives leads to better opportunities for students in a post-secondary education in the arts.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Having dance in the arts curriculum leads to better opportunities for students in a post-secondary education in the arts.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Having multiple arts electives leads to better opportunities for students in a professional setting.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Having dance in the arts curriculum leads to better opportunities for students in a professional setting.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Arts teachers are encouraged and provided regular time to collaborate with one another.

Strongly Agree

- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

I attend most shows and events that include the arts.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

I evaluate the teachers based on their students' performances.

Strongly agree

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Other:

I am included and attend Performing and Visual Art department meetings.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

The arts department in my building is well rounded because of the addition of dance in the arts curriculum.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

I support arts field trips.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

What have you noticed about the school's overall climate that has changed since adding dance to the curriculum? In other words, do you find more support and participation of the arts overall within the student body?

Name the top three reasons you feel make an arts program successful.

I feel the district is supportive of the arts.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

What are some collaborations that you have seen at your school?

A copy of your responses will be emailed to the address you provided.